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# Australian Orchid Review



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## A COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE NATIVE ORCHIDS OF AUSTRALIA

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BY DAVID L. JONES

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Part Three: Epiphytic Orchids  
Appendix: Naturalised Orchids

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## From the Editor's Desk

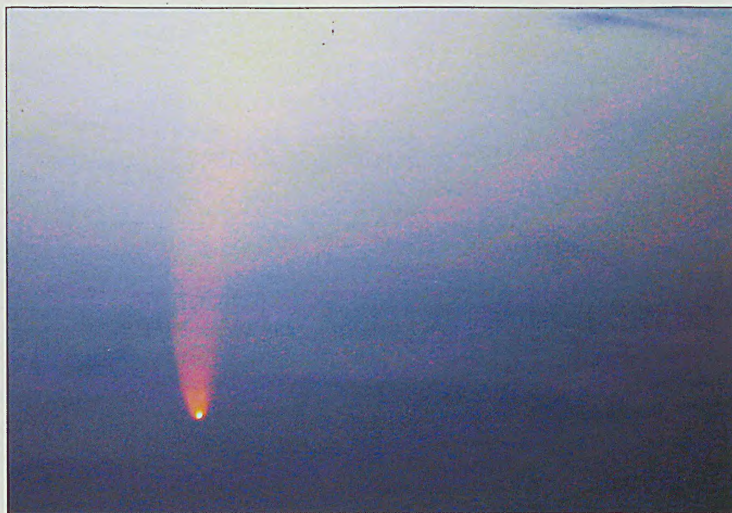


The feature article in this issue is on Australian Twig Epiphytes. Michael Harrison is well placed to write such a critique as he has observed almost all of these species in the wild. Finding these highly specialised and often diminutive orchids in the wild is quite an exciting and satisfying experience, especially when you often find the roots first and then have to search for the plant itself. This continues the commitment of the *AOR* to provide quality articles on our indigenous orchid species.

South-east Asia is the hub of orchid cultivation. Murray Shergold from Easy Orchids gives us an insight to the Malaysian orchid scene, from huge professional first class exhibitions to extensive orchid farms and the plethora of native orchids that may be seen in the wild. Along a similar line, Thelma Keith from Townsville reflects on a major show that Singapore that she recently attended with her well-known husband Mick (of Keith's Nursery fame). The structuring of such events would be a daunting task but one that is organised so professionally.

The next World Orchid Conference is being held in Miami, Florida 18-27 January 2008, with Singapore being the host nation in 2011. It has been such a long time since the last WOC was held in Australia, being the 6th WOC in September 1969. We did have one "across the ditch" in New Zealand in September 1990. Perhaps Perth in Western Australia (who do such a splendid job organising successful conferences) or Cairns or Townsville (who have staged profitable AOC and APOC conferences) in north Queensland (where they have so many orchids and orchid growers) may put in a bid down the track to host such an event in the future.

In December 2005 the orchid world lost nurserywoman and orchid judge Norma Stafford, who was the nucleus of the Sapphire Coast Orchid Club on the south coast of New South Wales. At the beginning of 2007 Lou Sasso passed away at the grand age of 101. Lou, who served a couple of terms as President of OSNSW, won many awards for his orchids over the decades and featured prominently in many of the older issues of the *AOR*. He continued to grow and show his orchids up until his passing. Our sympathies go to the families of Norma and Lou.



In most parts of Australia we were recently treated to a brief showing of McNaught's Comet. I was fortunate enough to catch up with professional photographer Kurt Ams just down the road from my home at Seven Hills who was taking some shots just after sunset. I have included one of Kurt's images of this rare stellar event, more images can be viewed at <http://martin.mactrax.net/ams>

David Banks

Editor, Australian Orchid Review  
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## OUR COVER



*Sarcophilus australis*, Tasmanian form (photo: Ron Parsons). See Mike Harrison's article on "twig epiphytes" in this issue.

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# Twig



*Bulbophyllum argyropus*



# Epiphytes of Australia

By Michael Harrison

Within the Australian orchid flora, the twig epiphytes are an interesting group of species in terms of their adaptation to a specialised habitat, and the survival techniques they employ.

Essentially, the twig epiphytes have evolved to exploit an environmental niche that is largely unavailable to other epiphytic species. They are small, lightweight plants that are able to colonise the slender, twiggy parts of the host tree, right down to thin diameters of just a few millimetres. A number of species will also germinate and grow on dead wood, a behaviour definitely avoided by typical, larger epiphytes. In such situations, these species lead high-risk lives, but not only do they exist, they thrive, at times forming colonies of many hundreds of plants. In short, they are a most successful group of orchids.

Many of Australia's twig epiphytes are members of subtribe *Sarcanthinae*, and this adaptation appears to represent a major line of evolutionary development within this group of orchids. Certainly, there are other groups where a few species have adopted this lifestyle, at least optionally, but most of the true twig epiphytes are small to medium sized sarcanths.

Like most of Australia's epiphytic orchids, the twig epiphytes are basically rainforest plants. They grow on rainforest trees in various situations and habitats, with each species having its own range of ecological requirements and restraints. As well as occurring in typical rainforest situations, many twig epiphytes inhabit so-called "dry scrub" rainforest, a generic term describing a depauperate closed forest community with a relatively low canopy and a reduced variety of tree species. These dry scrubs vary in their structure and species make-up from place to place, but they generally occur in lower rainfall areas (in rain shadows or monsoon affected regions), and/or on poorer soils, and often on steep hillsides. They also occur as "patches" of rainforest in protected gullies or on rocky hillsides or knobs. These are often good places to see epiphytic orchids, and not just necessarily twig epiphytes, for they grow closer to ground level, due to the lower canopy, and are easier to spot. Even so, twig epiphytes may be initially difficult to locate because of their small size and cryptic nature, and often the first thing to be noticed are orchid roots snaking along a thin branch. These roots can then be traced along to the leaves, sometimes a metre or more away,

and the plant appreciated in its entirety. The same species, when occurring in typical tall rainforest, will inhabit the upper canopy, 25 or 30 metres above the ground, and will be impossible to see from the forest floor.

Another favoured situation for twig epiphytes is on rainforest margins, or in places where the canopy has been broken, and thus extra light is allowed to penetrate. Cliff lines, watercourses and roadways all create such opportunities. Relatively small patches of gallery forest may support large colonies, and occasional trees on rainforest margins or in sheltered gullies may support dozens of plants. At times it is difficult to understand why such colonies have become established in relatively small areas, whilst apparently identical habitats in close proximity remain uncolonised. The vagaries of nature make it impossible to quantify precisely, but such factors as topography, altitude, aspect, temperature differentials, air flow patterns, and light and humidity levels all play their part in determining the suitability of a particular habitat, at both the macro- and micro-environment levels. One observation to be made is that colonies of some twig epiphytes often grow in mist zones, where low cloud frequently envelops mountaintops, or regularly flows up mountainsides or across a saddle on a ridge. Such spots are generally festooned with colonies of epiphytic moss, its presence a lush reminder of the cool, humid atmosphere that prevails in such places.

The ecological advantage enjoyed by twig epiphytes is, of course, the capacity to colonise situations where competition from other epiphytes is low. On the outermost twigs, few other epiphytic species are encountered, and those that are present are similarly small and lightweight. Epiphytic mosses and lichens present the main competition, especially in high rainfall areas, and although there are no doubt times when mosses overwhelm and smother orchids, they mostly co-exist in relative harmony, and generally the orchids appreciate the extra moisture and coolness provided by the moss. However, should the bio-mass exceed the weight-bearing capacity of the limb, then the combined load will bring it down, so there is a definite limit.

All epiphytic plants lead insecure existences, dependant as they are upon the well being of the host tree, and with climate and

prevailing weather conditions combining at times to create added stresses. Twig epiphytes in particular face even greater uncertainties, for the thin branches and twigs upon which they perch are susceptible to a number of damaging agents. Birds and arboreal animals commonly break off the outer limbs of trees, especially if they are dead and brittle, and any plants growing on these limbs quickly perish once they reach the forest floor. Heavy storms and high winds also take their toll, as do falling branches from higher in the canopy.

To overcome these problems, twig epiphytes have evolved certain strategies to ensure their survival. For these species, the emphasis is not upon the individual but upon the species as a whole. The trade-off for reduced competition out on the twiggy branchlets is the precariousness of such situations, and to counter the resulting high mortality rate, the twig epiphytes are especially fertile, high germination, fast maturing species. In general, most twig epiphytes produce large amounts of seed, which germinates freely, and at times literally hundreds of developing protocorms may be seen on host branches. Seedlings grow to flowering size quickly, often producing their first blooms within two or three years of germination, and it is not uncommon to see a developing seed capsule on a juvenile plant in its first flowering season. Thus, there is a rapid generational turnover.

This strategy is well suited to small-growing, low mass plants. Much less energy is required to produce a flowering sized plant of, say, *Sarcochilus australis*, than *Dendrobium speciosum*, which may take 10 years or more to reach flowering size. Many more individual plants can be produced in a much shorter time, so that the strength of these species lies in mass production, rather than a much greater investment in fewer, larger plants. This tactic allows these species to take advantage of a marginal ecological niche that is simply unavailable to heavier, slower growing species. As long as a fresh generation can be produced every two or three years, it doesn't really matter that individuals are lost on a regular, even frequent basis, for they are being easily and quickly replaced.

The capacity of many species of twig epiphytes to rapidly increase their numbers during periods of favourable conditions, no doubt accounts in part for their success. With Australia constantly influ-





*Sarcophilus hillii*

*Sarcophilus minutiflos*, near Townsville, Qld



*Sarcophilus hillii*, Picton, NSW

*Sarcophilus dilatatus*, Kroombit Tops, Qld







*Sarcochilus spathulatus*, Barrington Tops, NSW

*Sarcochilus australis*, lower Blue Mountains, NSW







*Sarcophilus hirticalcar*



*Plectorrhiza brevilabris*, North Qld

enced by the El Nino Southern Oscillation, and the resulting fluctuations in weather, usually in two to seven year cycles, any species that is able to grow to reproductive size quickly will have an advantage. Periods of drought, particularly if prolonged, may adversely affect population numbers, but when suitable conditions return, numbers build up again within a couple of years. This is at odds with the larger, slower-growing species, where the period from germination to flowering size is much longer. Such population dynamics explain why colonies of some species advance and decline quite dramatically over relatively short periods of time, for although these processes affect all species to a certain extent, twig epiphytes are especially fluid. This fast reproductive rate and generational turnover would also presumably make these species more readily adaptable to long-term environmental changes, such as global warming or cooling.

Because many twig epiphytes are so often seen as relatively small, apparently young plants, it has been suggested that these species have a naturally short life span. This, however, is not the case, for large specimen plants are encountered from time to time, growing not on the twiggy parts of the host, along with the vast majority of their brethren, but on a main limb not liable to die-back or being

easily broken off. Such plants mature into large specimens simply because they are able to do so, by virtue of the long-term security and stability provided by that part of the host upon which they are growing. Even those individuals that establish themselves on slender, more typical branches will grow into large, mature plants as long as the host limb remains viable for long enough, for although these species reach reproductive size quite quickly, it still probably takes 10 or more years for them to reach their full vegetative potential, even under ideal conditions. It is therefore true that twig epiphytes are indeed often short-lived plants, but this is due to their high-risk lifestyle, not because they genetically engineered to be so.

Many twig epiphytes within subtribe Sarcanthinae aerialise some or many of their roots, a strategy that gives these plants a good chance of surviving dislodgement from their host. Aerial roots are no different from the regular roots of the plant, except that instead of attaching to the host limb, they extend out into mid-air, at times growing into a tangled mass. Like normal roots, they are able to absorb water and nutrients. Often these aerial roots attach themselves elsewhere on the host, or even at times onto a different host, giving the plant one or more separate points of attachment, and thus an increased level of security, for even if the primary host limb

is broken off, the plant may well be saved from falling. And, even when aerial roots have been unable to find extra footholds, by their very nature they give the plant a much greater chance of snagging an alternate host limb during freefall. Indeed, it is quite common to find such plants, hanging awkwardly on a branch or in a shrub, clearly having fallen from higher up, and often with a portion of the original host twig still in tow. As long as they do not fall all the way to the forest floor, such plants will usually have no trouble in re-attaching to their new host, and will survive, reorienting themselves within a year or two.

The twig epiphytes may be arbitrarily divided into two groups, the obligate twig epiphytes and the optional twig epiphytes. The first group, the obligates, consists of those species that have evolved specifically to grow in this manner. These are the "true" twig epiphytes, dedicated to this habit, and it is their normal and almost exclusive nature to grow in this manner, on the very outermost branchlets and twigs of the host tree, and although occasional plants may be seen on larger limbs, this is atypical and unusual. The majority of these species are members of subtribe Sarcanthinae, although there is one *Dendrobium* and one *Bulbophyllum*.

The second group, the optional twig epiphytes, contains those species that are commonly seen growing as twig epi-





*Papillilabium beckeri*, Ellenborough Falls, NSW



*Plectorrhiza tridentata*, Kroombit Tops, Qld

phytes, but which are by no means restricted to this habit, and they just as often occur as typical epiphytes on the more substantial parts of the host, such as the trunk or main limbs, and may even occur as lithophytes.

### The Obligate Twig Epiphytes

#### *Sarcochilus australis* (Lindley) H.G. Reichb.

This medium sized sarcanth occurs as a typical twig epiphyte in sheltered gullies and along watercourses, where it colonises a number of host species. It prefers fairly open, airy situations in moderate light levels, and generally avoids rainforest proper.

*S. australis* has a wide distribution from north-eastern Tasmania, and along the east coasts of Victoria and New South Wales. It has also been reported from south-eastern Queensland, where it is apparently rare. In the southern two-thirds of its range *S. australis* occurs at low to moderate altitudes, often quite close to the coast, but north of the Hunter River it is restricted to higher elevations and becomes much less common, and we have observed it near Glen Innes.

In favourable situations, *S. australis* forms colonies of hundreds of plants, with most growing on twigs and small limbs up to 10 mm. in diameter. Occasional individuals may also be seen on thicker

branches, and it is these plants that survive to grow into large, sometimes multi-headed specimens. A highly perfumed species, *S. australis* blooms in spring, and on mature plants the inflorescences may reach 150 mm. in length and carry a dozen or more 25 mm. tall flowers, which are usually green with a white, purple striped labellum. It has proven to be a difficult species to cultivate for more than a couple of years.

#### *Sarcochilus spathulatus* R.Rogers

Superficially similar to *S. australis*, although with distinct differences in floral morphology, *S. spathulatus* is a rainforest epiphyte that occurs from the Watagan Mountains, just south of Newcastle, along the coastal ranges of NSW and into southern Queensland, where it reaches its northern limit around Kenilworth. It also grows on the Bunya Mountains, north-west of Toowoomba.

*S. spathulatus* is usually seen in rainforest in low to moderate light on the outermost branches of trees and shrubs, commonly within a metre or two of the ground. The lower limbs of the hoop pine are a favoured position. It also grows high in the upper canopy, where it is impossible to spot from ground level. Like *S. australis*, it regularly germinates and grows on dead twigs, and it is not uncommon to find a mass of plants growing amongst broken

limbs caught up in the lower branches of a host. Good colonies are often seen in mist zones, where plants grow in the epiphytic mosses that are a feature of these environments. *S. spathulatus* typically aerialises many of its roots.

*S. spathulatus* blooms in the spring. It is usually somewhat of a progressive flowerer, with the older flowers beginning to fade whilst the distal buds have yet to open. A large plant may carry up to 8 flowers per inflorescence, with each flower 12 to 15 mm. tall. They vary in colour from bright green, through khaki and tan, to chocolate brown. The labellum is white with a yellow chin and it usually carries some purple markings. It is a fairly difficult species to grow in cultivation.

#### *Sarcochilus hillii* (F.Muell.) F.Muell.

This small epiphyte is common in many places throughout its range, and individual host trees may support scores of plants. It is distributed from south-eastern NSW to at least as far north as the Calliope Range, inland from Gladstone in Queensland.

*S. hillii* carries narrow, fleshy, channelled, grey-green leaves, and it will tolerate brighter, drier conditions than many of its relatives. It often grows in quite exposed positions, although it also regularly occurs in damp, shady gullies and in typical rainforest situations. Dry rainforest associations seem to suit it best.





*Sarcochilus australis*, near Glen Innes, NSW  
*Drymoanthus minutus*



*Plectorrhiza brevilabris*, Noosa, Qld



*Bulbophyllum windsorensis*, Mt Windsor, Qld



This is a progressively flowering species that produces bursts of 2 or 3 flowers per inflorescence every week or two during the summer months. The widely opening flowers are white, with a distinctive crystalline texture, and are up to 10 mm. in diameter. It usually performs reasonably well in cultivation.

#### *Sarcochilus minutiflos* Bailey

This essentially tropical species is closely related to *S. hillii*, being vegetatively identical and florally similar to that species. However, *S. minutiflos* has more triangular-shaped flowers that do not open as widely as *S. hillii*. There are also differences in the structure of the labellum.

*S. minutiflos* occurs from around Gladstone, where its distribution just overlaps with *S. hillii*, northwards to Princess

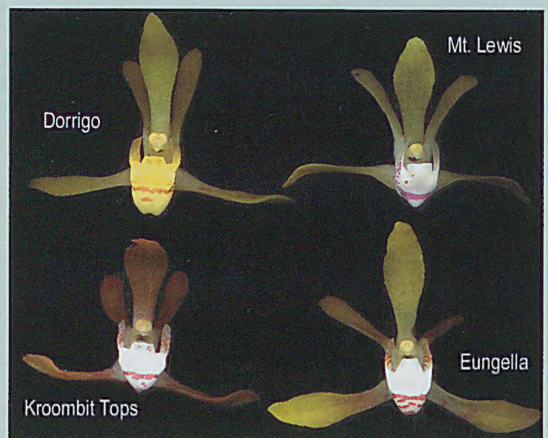
Charlotte Bay on Cape York Peninsula. It tends to avoid wet, closed forests, preferring open, fairly bright situations, often in dry rainforest. It grows on the outermost branches and twigs of trees, and on shrubs, often within a metre or two of the ground.

Like *S. hillii*, this is a progressively, summer flowering species, and it is usually fairly reliable in cultivation. It is often known under its old name of *S. tricallitatus*.

#### *Sarcochilus dilatatus* F. Muell.

Dry rainforest associations are the preferred habitat for this species, and it shuns excessively damp, shaded situations; it often grows on the lower limbs of trees and large shrubs on rainforest margins or in areas with moderate sub-canopy light penetration. It is commonly seen on the lower

*Sarcochilus "olivaceus"*  
complex: *S. parviflorus*  
(Dorrigo, NSW), *S. borealis*  
(Mt. Lewis, Qld), *S.*  
*argochilus* (Kroombit Tops,  
Qld) & *S. argochilus*  
(Eungella, Qld).







*Bulbophyllum lewisense*, Mt Lewis, Qld



*Bulbophyllum macphersonii*



*Sarcocilus serrulatus*, Mt Lewis, Qld

limbs hoop pines, even sometimes in plantations.

*S. dilatatus* is distributed from the far north-eastern corner of NSW and into Queensland to at least as far north as the Calliope Range, inland from Gladstone. It generally grows at low to moderate elevations, but usually not close to the coast, and in some places it forms large colonies of hundreds of plants.

This is a spring flowering species that carries up to 10 flowers per inflorescence, but commonly only four to six. The flowers are between 10 and 20 mm. tall; flower colour ranges from khaki, through tan to chocolate brown. The white labellum carries yellow and brown markings. This species is a difficult prospect in cultivation.

#### *Sarcocilus serrulatus* D.Jones

This highland rainforest and cloud forest species from far north Queensland grows on trees in high rainfall areas, frequently along creeks and watercourses, and usually in fairly heavy shade. It also may be seen hanging in drifts of epiphytic moss, somewhat in the manner of *S. spathulatus*.

The leaves on *S. serrulatus* are bright apple green in colour, up to 100 mm. long and the margins are minutely serrulate in their distal portions. The relatively short inflorescences carry between three and eight 15 mm. tall flowers. The flowers are red-brown in colour and the labellum is white with brown barring. *S. serrulatus* flowers in the spring.

*S. serrulatus* has a restricted distribution

on and around the Atherton Tableland, and is generally uncommon, for although, like most of its relatives, it tends to be a colony forming species, it does not produce high-density populations. It has proven to be a difficult species to grow in cultivation for any length of time.

#### *Sarcocilus hirticalcar* (Dockr.) M.Clements & B.Wallace

This rare species from the McIlwraith Range on Cape York Peninsula is known from just a small number of creek systems, where it forms low density colonies growing on trees and vines, usually close to water. It grows on a number of hosts, including hoop pine, generally in moderate shade at altitudes between 300 and 600 metres.

Vegetatively, *S. hirticalcar* resembles *S. falcatus*. The falcate leaves are up to 100 mm. long and 15 mm. wide. This is a progressively flowering species that blooms over several months during spring and summer. Usually only two or three flowers are open at once, although over the course of a flowering season up to a dozen and a half flowers may be produced as the inflorescence extends. The flowers have a distinctive colour scheme, yellow with a band of russet red around the centre of the flower, and the labellum has a prominent, protruding chin. It usually grows well in cultivation, although it requires minimum wintertime temperatures of no less than 12 degrees C.

#### *Plectorrhiza tridentata* (Lindley) Dockr.

This very common species has a wide

*Plectorrhiza tridentata*, Dorrigo, NSW







*Saccolabiopsis armitii*

*Papillilabium beckleri*



distribution from south-eastern Victoria to far north Queensland. Over most of its range it occurs from near sea level to high on the ranges, although in north Queensland it is restricted to mountainous areas inland from the coast.

*P. tridentata* produces long stems with persistent, widely separated leaves. It is renowned for aerialising many of its roots, and is commonly known as the "tangle-root" orchid. It is a spring flowering species, producing small, highly perfumed green to dark brown flowers, up to 12 mm. tall.

A very adaptable species, *P. tridentata* may be found in dense rainforest, through to wet sclerophyll forest in fairly open situations, though usually in heavy shade. It is usually an easy species to grow.

*Thrixspermum congestum*





*Plectorrhiza brevilabris* (F.Muell.)  
Dockr.

The distribution of this orchid extends from Noosa, in south-eastern Queensland, to the McIlwraith Range on Cape York Peninsula. In the southern part of its range it grows in the lowlands, but in north Queensland it is restricted to higher elevations.

Similar in vegetative habit to *P. tridentata*, *P. brevilabris* produces long stems with widely separated leaves. The inflorescences are up to 150 mm long and carry as many as 20 flowers. The flowers are up to 20 mm. tall and are green or pale brownish yellow, usually with some darker brown markings on the floral segments. The labellum carries a distinctive long, slender, downwards pointing spur. It usu-



*Schistotylus purpuratus*  
*Dendrobium carrii*







*Schoenorchis sarcophylla*

*Bulbophyllum lilianiae*



ally flowers in the summer. It is generally a reliable species in cultivation.

*P. brevilabris* is a rainforest species and is common in many areas. It grows on trees and shrubs, and like *S. dilatatus*, it often colonises plantation hoop pine.

***Papillilabium beckleri* (F.Muell. ex Benth.)**

One of the smaller epiphytic sarcanths in Australia, *P. beckleri* typically grows on very slim twigs on trees overhanging creeks and streams, although at times it may be seen on trees in sheltered, shady spots on hillsides. It is not uncommon to find this species on small broken twigs hanging in masses of epiphytic moss beside watercourses. Generally speaking, it prefers wet forest situations.

Its small, highly perfumed flowers are carried in a spiral arrangement on the inflorescence, and are produced in spring. They are white, green and purple in colour and about 8 mm. tall. *P. beckleri* is an abundant species in some places but may be hard to locate because of its small size and discreet habit. It is distributed from the Illawarra district of NSW to south-eastern Queensland and occurs from near sea level to moderate elevations on the ranges. It is often somewhat touchy in cultivation.

***Schistotylus purpuratus* (Rupp) Dockr.**





*Taeniophyllum muelleri*

This is another small sarcanth, similar to *P. beckleri* in appearance, although with grey-green foliage, and frequently with small, reddish spots on the leaves. It usually grows on the very smallest of twigs on rainforest trees and shrubs, and is distributed from just south of the Comboyne Plateau in NSW northwards into southern Queensland. It occurs at moderate to high altitudes, usually well inland from the coast.

*S. purpuratus* is an uncommon species, but where colonies exist there may be hundreds of plants in a relatively small area. It grows in drier, more open situations than *P. beckleri*, and it tends to avoid rainforest proper, preferring situations where light levels are higher. It blooms in the spring, and inflorescences carry up to eight green, white and purple fragrant flowers about 5 mm. tall. It is not an easy species to grow in cultivation.

#### ***Drymoanthus minutus* Nicholls**

This miniature orchid grows on the outermost twigs of rainforest trees in north Queensland, and is often seen within accumulations of broken twigs and mosses that hang from lower tree limbs just a metre or two above the ground. It also grows on shrubs and small trees near or overhanging creeks and rivers.

The distribution of *D. minutus* extends

*Schoenorchis sarcophylla*







*Tuberolabium papuanum*

*Taeniophyllum malianum*



*Bulbophyllum sladeanum*



from the Paluma Range, north of Townsville, to Cairns, and it occurs from fairly low altitudes to moderately high elevations on the tablelands. Invariably, it grows in wet forest situations, often near creeks and rivers, and usually in heavy shade.

The leaves on this species are rarely longer than 20 mm. and are about 5 mm. wide. The short inflorescences carry up to 7 or 8 tiny flowers that are no taller than 3 mm. The flowers are green with a fleshy white labellum. The flowering season is summer.

*D. minutus* usually grows fairly well in cultivation.

***Saccolabopsis armitii* (F.Muell.) Dockr.**

This tropical species has a wide distribution from at least as far south as the Calliope Range, inland from Gladstone, almost to the top of Cape York Peninsula. It is an adaptable species that grows in a variety of situations, but it avoids wet, closed forests, preferring instead more open, drier habitats.

*S. armitii* grows on the outermost limbs of trees on rainforest margins, or in areas of dry scrub rainforest, where the canopy is low and there are reasonable levels of light. This species does not like heavy



shade, and in some areas on Cape York Peninsula it colonises small trees in monsoon scrub on rocky hillsides, where during the dry season the light penetration is quite strong. In such situations the plants' leaves become almost pink/purple in colour.

The flowers on *S. armitii* are small, only about 5 or 6 mm. tall, although the pendulous inflorescences may reach up to 90 mm. in length and carry up to 50 flowers. This is a progressively flowering species, and usually no more than one-third of the flowers are open at once. The flowers are yellow with a white lip and a bright red pollen cap. It flowers in spring and summer and usually grows well in cultivation.

#### ***Saccolabiopsis rectifolia* (Dockr.) Garay**

A rare species apparently known from just one area on the eastern side of the Atherton Tableland, *S. rectifolia* grows at fairly low altitudes in wet forest in heavy shade. It is a miniature orchid, virtually unknown in cultivation. In overall size, *S. rectifolia* is similar to *Drymoanthus minutus*, although it leaves are less fleshy and a paler green in colour, and the inflorescences are considerably longer, up to 70 mm. The small, pale green flowers are only about 5 mm. tall. It flowers in late winter and spring.

#### ***Schoenorchis sarcophylla* Schltr.**

A rare species known from just a couple of locations on Cape York Peninsula, *S. sarcophylla* is a small twig epiphyte that colonises the outermost branches of trees in rainforest overhanging creeks. In one place it has also been seen growing on shrubs on a hillside, some distance from water and in brighter light. This species produces fairly narrow, fleshy leaves, and tiny, bell-shaped, white flowers on branching inflorescences. It is seldom seen in cultivation.

#### ***Dendrobium carrii* Rupp & C.White**

Whilst most *Dendrobium* species will at times germinate and grow on slender limbs, it is not their usual habit to do so, and many such plants fail to thrive, or under their own increasing weight, fall to the ground before reaching flowering size. *D. carrii*, however, is designed to grow as a twig epiphyte (although it does not colonise the most slender twigs in the manner of the small sarcanths), and it typically grows on limbs of about 10–15 mm. in diameter in the upper canopy of tall rainforest trees.

*D. carrii* is a north Queensland native, and is restricted to the wet tropics between Innisfail and Cooktown. It grows in high elevation rainforest and cloud forest, where in the upper canopy of tall trees it is exposed to constant strong air movement and bright light, alternating with cloud. High rainfall is a feature of its habitat, and

the branches it colonises are also usually home to epiphytic mosses and lichens.

*D. carrii* has a creeping habit and usually branches extensively. Its 20 mm. tall pseudobulbs each carry two leaves, and are widely spaced on a slender, wiry rhizome. The flowers are not widely opening, and are white or cream; the waxy labellum is yellow with a few red markings. It flowers in the spring and is generally not easy to grow in cultivation for extended periods.

#### ***Bulbophyllum lilianiae* Rendle**

Many of the Australian *Bulbophyllum*s are equally at home on slender branches as they are on thicker limbs and tree trunks, but for one species, *B. lilianiae*, life as a twig epiphyte is the norm. Like *D. carrii*, *B. lilianiae* grows high in the canopy of tall rainforest and cloud forest trees, generally preferring limbs of 10–15 mm. thickness. At times the two species grow together.

Its distribution is restricted to highland areas on and around the Atherton Tableland in the wet tropics, and is seldom seen below 1000 metres altitude. These highland rainforests are constantly moist, and often dripping wet, and *B. lilianiae* is periodically exposed with bright light, alternating with heavy clouds and mists. Epiphytic mosses and lichens are abundant.

*B. lilianiae* carries small, conical pseudobulbs about 10 mm. tall, with a single, thin-textured leaf, and they are usually well spaced along thin, wiry rhizomes which form long strands along host branches. The inflorescences are upright and carry one or two greenish yellow flowers with red stripes. The labellum is red. This species is difficult to grow in cultivation.

#### ***Taeniophyllum* species**

Members of this genus are seldom seen in cultivation due to difficulty of culture and their horticulturally unimpressive flowers. The *Taeniophyllum* species of Australia, of which there are currently five, are not well understood and are in need of further study. The five currently recognised Australian species are *T. confertum*, from the north Queensland wet tropics, *T. flavum*, from the Evelyn Tableland to the McIlwraith Range, *T. lobatum*, from the Paluma Range, between Townsville and Ingham, *T. malianum*, from Iron Range and McIlwraith Range on Cape York Peninsula, and *T. muelleri*, from far north-eastern NSW to the top of Cape York Peninsula.

These species produce unusual, slightly flattened roots, which contain chlorophyll for photosynthesis, and no leaves. The inflorescences arise from the centre of the plant, from the point at which the roots originate. The flowers are mostly inconspicuous and short lived. Most species grow as typical twig epiphytes, with their

roots adhering tightly to the host limb. Sometimes quite large colonies of hundreds of plants are formed in a relatively small area in just one or two host trees.

Florally, our most impressive species is *T. malianum*. It grows on rainforest trees and shrubs, and aerialises the majority of its 200 mm long roots, and plants form untidy masses of pendulous roots, attached to the host by just a few. This species is a progressive flowerer, and only one or two flowers are open at one time. The creamy yellow flowers are relatively large for the genus. They are about 10 mm. tall and open widely.

#### **The Optional Twig Epiphytes**

A considerable number of species could be included in this group, for even where the typical habit of many species is not that of a twig epiphyte, certain individuals will grow in that manner. However, for the purposes of this article, only those species that are commonly seen growing as twig epiphytes will be discussed.

#### ***Sarcochilus parviflorus* Lindley (syn. *S. olivaceus*)**

Widely distributed from the NSW south coast to the very south-eastern corner of Queensland, *S. parviflorus* is a common and adaptable species found from near sea level to moderately high elevations. It

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often grows as a twig epiphyte in typical rainforest situations, especially on trees overhanging or close to watercourses. However, it also commonly grows on the main trunk and laterals of host trees, and in many places it may be seen as a lithophyte, growing on boulders and rocks on the rainforest floor in deep shade.

*S. parviflorus* is a moisture and shade loving species, which reaches its best development close to running water, and in such situations it may form high-density colonies of many hundreds of plants, often in association with epiphytic mosses.

A large plant of *S. parviflorus* may produce leaves up to 120 mm. in length and 30 mm wide. Occasional plants may branch to form multi-headed specimens. The inflorescences are up to 150 mm. long and carry as many as 18 flowers. The flowers are green, with a paler green or yellowish green labellum variously marked with reddish brown barring. This species produces a distinctive and pleasant spicy or pine resin perfume. It flowers in spring and is easy to grow in cultivation.

Sadly, the name *S. olivaceus* has been reduced to synonymy. Recent research has revealed that the type specimen for *S. parviflorus* is actually a *S. olivaceus*, meaning these two names apply to the same species. And, since the formal description for *S. parviflorus* was published earlier than the description for *S. olivaceus*, the name *S. parviflorus* has priority, and the name *S. olivaceus* will become a synonym.

#### ***Sarcophilus argophilus* D. Jones & M. Clements**

With the recent transfer of the name *S. parviflorus* to the NSW species previously known as *S. olivaceus* (see note under *S. parviflorus*, above), the species which had been known as *S. parviflorus* (i.e. the Queensland species with the white, red-barred lip), was left undescribed and without a name. David Jones has proposed the name *S. argophilus* for this species, and interprets it as having a distribution extending from the Toowoomba district of south

eastern Queensland all the way to far north Queensland. However, there is some variation in morphological features in populations of this species across its range, and more taxonomic research is required to clarify affinities within this group.

*S. argophilus* is usually found in areas inland from the coast at moderate altitudes, and often in drier rainforest associations away from watercourses, as opposed to *S. parviflorus*, which usually grows close to water. It carries slightly smaller flowers than *S. parviflorus*, and they vary in colour from green through to brown, and often with combinations of the two. The labellum is white with horizontal red barring. It flowers in the spring and usually grows well in cultivation.

#### ***Sarcophilus borealis* (Nicholls) M. Clements & D. Jones**

For many years *S. borealis* was considered to be a botanical variety of *S. olivaceus*, as var. *borealis*, but it now stands as a distinct species. It occurs in moderate to high altitude rainforest on the ranges and tablelands in far north Queensland, on and around the Atherton Tableland. The affinities between this species and *S. argophilus* require further investigation and clarification, as they are very similar species.

*S. borealis* commonly grows on trees along creeks, usually in heavy shade and often overhanging water. It tends to be a smaller growing plant than *S. parviflorus*, and generally carries just 3 to 5 flowers per inflorescence, although as many as 8 flowers may be carried on a robust plant. The flowers are green, often with a few brownish markings near the bases of the segments. The labellum is white, variously marked with red barring. This is usually a reliable species in cultivation.

#### ***Thrixspermum congestum* (Bailey) Dockr.**

This tropical species grows at low altitudes, usually close to the coast, on the outer and uppermost limbs of trees in rainforest, as well as on mangroves. It is dis-

tributed from Tully, in north Queensland, to the Iron Range area on Cape York Peninsula, and it has also been recorded from Melville Island, north of Darwin in the Northern Territory. It generally grows in situations of fairly bright light, and plants are often a yellowish green due to the light intensity.

*T. congestum* has an upright habit of growth and it usually aerialises many of its roots. The inflorescences are erect and the flowers are produced periodically from a terminal head of congested bracts. Usually only 2 or 3 flowers are open at once. The flowers are white and about 15 mm. in diameter, and they last for less than a day. This species is somewhat touchy in cultivation, and in temperate areas a heated glasshouse is required during the winter.

#### ***Tuberolabium papuanum* (Schltr.) J.J. Wood**

This medium sized sarcanth has a limited distribution, and is restricted to low to moderate altitudes between Innisfail and Cairns in north Queensland. It grows on the outermost limbs of rainforest trees, usually close to or overhanging creeks and rivers, in high rainfall areas. It flowers in summer and autumn.

This is a progressively flowering species, with short inflorescences that slowly elongate as more flowers are produced. Usually only 2 to 4 flowers are open at once on each inflorescence, and they last for only one day. The flowers are 5 or 6 mm. tall and are creamy yellow with a fleshy white labellum. *T. papuanum* can be a little difficult in cultivation and a minimum winter temperature of 15 degrees C is required.

#### ***Bulbophyllum sladeanum* A. Hawkes**

This species is closely related to *B. macphersonii*, but is distinguished by its larger flowers and spatulate labellum. It also tends to grow on more slender limbs, typically colonising small branches of 10 to 15 mm. diameter in the tree tops. Whilst *B. macphersonii* is also sometimes seen on thin limbs, it more commonly grows on

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thicker branches, and also on rocks, where it may form quite large mats, whereas *B. sladeanum* forms much smaller, more compact plants.

*B. sladeanum* grows in high elevation rainforests in north Queensland on and around the Atherton Tableland, and it is usually seen in fairly shady conditions. It is an autumn flowering species and produces multiple, single-flowered inflorescences about 30 mm. tall. The flowers are up to 25 mm. tall, widely opening, and dark purple in colour. Like *B. macphersonii*, it is an easy species to grow.

#### Other *Bulbophyllum* Species

A number of *Bulbophyllum* species from high elevation rainforest and cloud forest in north Queensland could also be included as optional twig epiphytes, although they are more commonly seen growing on larger branches and trunks of host trees. These include: *B. macphersonii*, *B. lageniforme*, *B. boonjee*, *B. lewisense*, *B. windsorensen*, *B. johnsonii* complex, *B. bowkettiae* and *B. woofei*. *B. argyropus* from north eastern NSW and south eastern Queensland, Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island could also be included in this category.

#### Cultivation of Twig Epiphytes

The successful cultivation of all orchids, but especially twig epiphytes, depends upon creating and maintaining an orchid house atmosphere that is conducive to the well being of these plants. Most of these species prefer cool, humid conditions, where temperatures seldom rise much above 30 degrees C, even on very hot days, and are often well below this level for most of the time. Excessive temperatures, which are often accompanied by low levels of humidity, are damaging to these plants, and will cause dehydration and loss of vigour. If plants are exposed to such conditions too often or for too long, it may eventually be fatal. However, it should be noted that high temperatures of up to 40 degrees C can be tolerated for relatively short periods, although these

should be avoided as much as possible.

During the warmer months it is important to provide adequate shading to reduce heat stress. Most twig epiphytes prefer quite heavy shade, and in cultivation double layers of 70% shade cloth will give suitable light conditions. Reduced light penetration will help to keep temperatures lower, and will also help in maintaining levels of humidity. Wintertime temperatures are usually not a problem, except for species with tropical requirements. Most of the temperate twig epiphytes are quite at home with night time winter minimums down to 0 degrees C, and even a degree or two lower, as long as they are protected from frost.

Routine watering is an important cultural undertaking, but its timing and volume are questions of judgement on the part of the grower, taking into consideration prevailing weather conditions and the season. Many twig epiphytes live in mist zones, or in areas that receive regular, but often brief, showers of rain. Of course, there are times of prolonged, even torrential rain, like anywhere else, but the point to be made is that many species are happiest when receiving frequent, light watering, just enough to wet them down and keep them plump. During the summer it may be necessary to water these plants twice daily, in the morning and then again in late afternoon or evening.

With regard to fertilising, twig epiphytes are not heavy feeders, and one-third to one-half recommended strength liquid feed once a week, except during the winter, is a good regimen.

Twig epiphytes will not grow in pots in standard orchid potting mixes, and must be grown as slab plants. Many slab materials have been used, but the best for these plants by far is natural cork bark, sawn into suitable sized totems. The slab width or diameter need be no more than 2 or 3 cm., but the length of the slab depends upon the size of the species being grown. Most of these species have reasonably long roots, so ensure the slab is able to accommodate the expected root run. In general, treefern

fibre is not suitable for any of the sarracanths, and most plants placed on treefern slabs or totems will refuse to send their roots into this medium, due to the acid, moisture-retaining nature of the fibre. However, treefern fibre is quite suitable for most *Dendrobiums* and *Bulbophyllums*. It will, of course, hold much more moisture for longer periods than cork, so watering should be adjusted accordingly.

Many twig epiphytes are difficult plants to maintain in cultivation. Because of their specialised requirements, they often do not perform well in the medium to long term, and several species are difficult to keep alive for more than a couple of years. There are some, such as *Sarcophilus parviflorus* and *Plectorrhiza tridentata* that generally grow strongly and present no particular problems, whereas such species as *S. australis* and *S. dilatatus* are notoriously unreliable.

For many years orchid enthusiasts have pondered the problems of maintaining these plants in orchid collections. Typically, a plant will grow well when first introduced, and for a year or two, or perhaps even longer, it will be a picture of health. Then, for no apparent reason, it will simply shed its leaves, and usually all that remains will be the plant's roots. Over the next month or two these will slowly shrivel, and the plant is lost. Occasionally, a new growth will appear from the leafless stem, and the plant will revive itself, but this is uncommon. This process is known informally as "Sudden Sarc. Death Syndrome" (SSDS), a name applied by Gerry Walsh in a series of articles in *The Orchadian* and *The Orchidophile* some years ago.

It is difficult to understand just what the causative factors are, but it certainly does not appear to be the result of insect attack or some fungus or bacterial infection, although it should be noted that these problems do occur from time to time. A likely explanation is that SSDS is caused by unsuitable growing conditions, including such cultural variables as absolute

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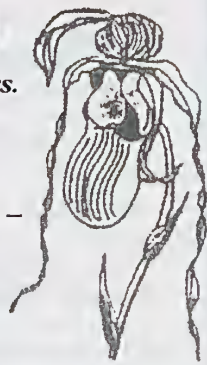
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temperatures and temperature fluctuations, lack of fresh air and air movement due to inadequate orchid house ventilation, humidity levels that are consistently too high or too low, incorrect light conditions (especially, for many of these species, light intensities that are too high), inappropriate watering techniques (watering too much or too little, watering at the wrong time of the day, or out of synchronisation with prevailing weather conditions), poor feeding programmes, and no doubt other factors.

Probably no one factor alone accounts for SSDS, but they act in combination to produce unsatisfactory conditions over a period of time, eventually resulting in a loss of plant vigour and then death. Whereas in most other groups of cultivated orchids, plants that are growing in unsatisfactory conditions become visibly weaker and their decline over a period of time is obvious, these twig epiphytes maintain apparent good health up to a certain point of no return, and then suddenly collapse. At present, the precise causative mechanism is unknown, and even in the hands of experienced growers with good orchid house conditions, these problem species are still unreliable and are not conducive to long-term cultivation. The fact that a number of them are now being grown from seed is a positive thing and should eventually provide horticultural forms that are more amenable to cultivation.

The fact that these species usually grow quite vigorously for a certain period after they have been brought into cultivation would suggest that conditions are initially to their liking, but that over a period of time a particular element necessary for long-term vitality is absent. Some stress factor is a work here but its exact nature is as yet unknown. It has been suggested that over watering and/or over feeding may be the cause, and this is worthy of consideration.

Twig epiphytes usually colonise the thinnest, smoothest limbs, with their roots extending for a metre or more from the

base of the plant, and often with a degree of aerialising. Their roots do not bury themselves into the bark, nor do they seek out thick moss pads, but instead remain completely exposed to the air. As such they genuinely could be called aerophytes, in that they derive virtually all of their requirements from the atmosphere, living on air as it were. The nutrients available to them from thin host twigs would be minimal, and likewise, although rainfall would provide water periodically, there would be little water-holding capacity. The bare twigs upon which they perch would dry out quickly after rain, leaving them to spend much of their time relatively dry. Fogs and mists probably satisfy most of their water requirements, and high levels of humidity, especially at night, would help to sustain them.

In the bush, these plants do not have somebody coming along and squirting them with a hose every day, and fertilising them once a week. Although they may respond positively to such treatment in the short term, for perhaps a season or two, it becomes a case of too much of a good thing for too long, and it eventually kills them.

The provision of fresh, moving air in the orchid house is of paramount importance for the well being of orchids generally, and twig epiphytes in particular, for they will not tolerate stale, stuffy conditions for too long. They are plants of the outermost limbs where almost constant air movement is a feature of their natural state. Too often, orchid house design or siting does not allow for adequate air movement into the house and across and around the plants. This failing is at the heart of so many cultural problems, and SSDS may simply be a response to poor air movement, especially during hot, humid weather, when SSDS is most likely to strike. A saturated, heavy atmosphere in a poorly ventilated orchid house during late summer and early autumn, when temperatures and humidity levels are high, presents real dangers for these orchids. It is often difficult for the grower to know what to do during hot

summer days, when the first instinct is to water your orchids to keep them cool and damp. However, it can be a real trap to water orchids under these hot conditions, for unless you are able to reduce the temperature and then hold it down, the wet plants simply heat up again, as if in a Turkish sauna. They literally can be broiled by such treatment. It is better to keep the atmosphere as cool as possible by watering the paths and under bench areas, rather than watering the orchids as such. Save the watering for late afternoon or evening, when the plants will be cooled by the water and will remain cool and damp overnight. And remember to increase shading during the warmer months to reduce heat and light stress on the plants during these times.

Certainly, the best thing a grower can do is to visit these plants in the wild to see and assess the conditions under which they live. Of course, they do not all grow in the same places and under the same conditions, so it is important to gain an understanding of the ecological requirements of each species. Those that tend to grow in drier forest associations, such as *Sarcocylus australis*, *S. dilatatus* and *S. hillii*, usually grow in brighter light and are able to tolerate longer periods without rainfall, whilst wet forest species, like *S. spathulatus* and *S. parviflorus*, are more sensitive to these factors. Many other subtle variables come into play, and it is by experiencing the natural habitat that the grower may draw conclusions about how best to replicate the environmental conditions necessary for cultural success.

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# *Rhizanthella slateri* – Recognition

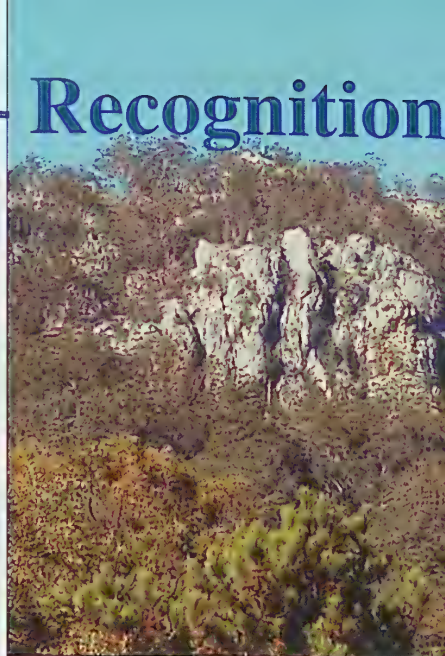
by Alan Stephenson

I regret I chose to put a question mark at the end of the title of this article but with my seemingly endless contact with members of local, state and federal governments I feel the need to state nothing is ever guaranteed, as with all manner of elected bodies anything can be changed at the whim of one person or the outside influences of a major financial donor. These days these contributors appear to be developers of differing persuasions but all determined to see their special project given the official seal of approval from governments eager for campaign cash.

Readers might be aware our mysterious Eastern Underground Orchid, *Rhizanthella slateri* was nominated for and received a listing as a Vulnerable Species under the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act 1995) on 6-12-2005. My local Council (Shoalhaven) was asked for comment on this nomination prior to the formal listing, as two specimens had been located within its boundaries. Being true environmental leaders the Council lodged an objection to the listing but fortunately this objection

was ignored, however with the knowledge and expectation of the success of the impending nomination, Council approved a development (26-11-2005) on the land where the most recent local specimens had been uncovered, so naturally this is the reason for the question mark. This property is currently a vineyard with weeds more impressive than any visible grape vines. One can never be certain of anything where governments are involved although the intentions of my local Council are easy to interpret.

Early in 2006 a further nomination was lodged for increased recognition of the rare and threatened status of *Rhizanthella slateri*. I was asked for and provided comment on the nomination and in early December 2006 the listing was posted on the NSW National Parks website. The nomination was for listing as a Vulnerable Species; however the NSW Scientific Committee has seen fit to not list the orchid as such but the entire population as an Endangered Population. The exhibition period for the final determination began on 8-12-2006 and ends on 9-2-2007. At least we can be



Alum Mountain, Bulahdelah, New South Wales.

assured this body has the best interests of *Rhizanthella slateri* at heart and will not be swayed by outside influences.

All persons interested either in *Rhizanthella slateri* or conservation in general would be aware of the immediate problems associated with this species. At Bulahdelah on the mid-north coast of NSW a road by-pass will decimate a large percentage of the population, along with the largest population of *Cryptostylis hunteriana* and a newly named terrestrial species, *Corybas dowlingii*. The NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) in their wisdom have decided to translocate all individuals of *Rhizanthella slateri* and *Cryptostylis hunteriana* which have chosen to survive for millennia in the path chosen for the by-pass to a site which is yet to be determined, in the misguided expectation both species will thrive. An expert committee has been formed to oversee the translocation and make reports of the process. I have stated in my most recent submission, the only reports made will be on the rapidity of the demise of any orchids involved in this ill considered exercise.

Features of the final determination are; the notation of all known sites beginning with the type site of Bulahdelah, the Watagan Mountains, the Blue Mountains, Wiseman's Ferry area, Agnes Banks and two sites near Nowra. Mention was also made of the most recent *Rhizanthella* species formerly described from the Lamington Plateau, as *Rhizanthella omissa*, although the new specific name was not used. The committee also noted the frequently destructive method of the accidental finding of most individuals of this genus. Of course the main concern expressed regarding the viability of the population is the construction of the road

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# at Last?



by-pass, including altered drainage to the habitat and subsequent weed invasion resulting from the clearing of vegetation. Population fragmentation and disruption of pollination have been considered as a threat as is collection by orchid enthusiasts, although I prefer to think of collection as a lesser problem. I expect my faith in human nature might be disappointed but I would like to think any concerned orchid person would not consider installing a pickled sample in their trophy cabinet, which could not be shown to any respectable person. The publicity afforded this species has also been considered as a possible contributing factor in the decline of the population, as is the general environmental and demographic stochasticity due to the restricted area and small size of the population in the Great Lakes local government area. The committee continues with the observation, the population is facing "a very high risk of extinction" in New South Wales in the future as determined in accordance with the following criteria as prescribed by the Threatened Species Conservation Act 2002:

## Clause 19

- (a) it is disjunct or near the limit of its geographic range
- (b) it is otherwise of significant conservation value

## Clause 21:

The geographic distribution of the population is estimated or inferred to be highly restricted and:

- (a) a projected or continuing decline is observed, estimated or inferred in
  - (1) an index of abundance appropriate to the taxon
  - (2) geographic distribution, habitat quality or diversity, or genetic diversity

## Clause 22

The estimated total number of mature individuals in the population is low, and;  
(a) a projected or continuing decline is observed, estimated or inferred in:

- (1) an index of abundance appropriate to the taxon
- (2) geographic distribution, habitat quality or diversity, or genetic diversity

## Clause 23

The estimated total number of mature individuals of the population is observed, estimated or inferred to be very low.

The document was presented under the name of Associate Professor Lesley Hughes, Chairperson Scientific Committee.

My cynicism indicates some objections could be lodged by both the NSW RTA and Planning NSW as these are the departments involved. At this time some observant reader would note the absence of any input from the Environment Minister. This is because under Part 3a of the NSW Planning Act any development can be deemed to be "State Significant" by the planning minister and any environmental considerations from the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) are reduced to

"advice only". In theory a planning minister could nominate a garden shed on a vacant lot to be state significant, regardless of the value of either the garden shed or the land on which it is sited and there is no compulsion or obligation to heed any advice offered by DEC.

In regard to the translocation of *Cryptostylis hunteriana*, no studies have been undertaken to assess suitability of the area for either pollinator or the hydrological requirements of this saprophytic species indicating a lack of thought and preparedness.

In conclusion, I should mention the RTA have decided to translocate *Rhizanthella slateri* without any knowledge of the vegetative habitat, fungal requirements, pollinating vector, or the method of seed dispersal, so one can visualise how well prepared they are for this futile exercise. It is with the above points firmly embedded in my consciousness; I await the end of the exhibition period of the final determination with some trepidation, as it could prove to be either the salvation of *Rhizanthella slateri* or the final solution.

**Alan W. Stephenson**  
Conservation Director  
Australian Orchid Council (AOC)  
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# Collectors' Plant Fair 2007

The 3rd Collectors' Plant Fair at Bilpin will showcase 40 growers of distinctive, unusual and collectable plants – plants that are not readily obtainable. It is being held on Saturday 21 April, 9.00am to 4.00pm and Sunday 22 April, 9.00am to 3.00pm at Woodgreen, 27 Powells Road, Bilpin NSW (in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney).

A must for all keen gardeners, the Collectors' Plant Fair offers a huge range of plants suitable for coastal or inland gardens – for the tropical or cool climate garden, the native or cottage garden, country estate or balcony. It offers the opportunity to find that hard-to-get-hold-of-plant to add to your collection.

The Collectors' Plant Fair is held in the delightful garden setting of Woodgreen – a collector's garden brimming with unusual collectable plants.

As well, the Collectors' Plant Fair presents an inspirational Speaker Program:

## **SALLY JOHANNSOHN – Collecting for a Beautiful Garden**

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Sally will inspire you with her passion for collecting, importing and growing rare, choice plants. Her beautiful garden at Neika, Tasmania, cleverly blends her design skills and plant knowledge and her Plant Hunters Nursery is well known to collectors.

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Share David's enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, the truly rare. An avid collector of rare and unusual plants, and editor of the *Australian Orchid Review*, David is currently working on his sixth book, *Growing Rare, Unusual and Collectable Plants*.

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The Collectors' Plant Fair will also host representatives of the horticultural industry to provide expert information and advice on a range of gardening subjects and on Sunday there will be free short talks from the growers and practical demonstrations in the plant stall area.

Bilpin is in Sydney Street Directories. It is approximately 95 km west of Sydney on Bells Line of Road (Route 40) between Richmond and Lithgow (35 km west of Richmond or 48 km east of Lithgow). Take the Richmond Road exit from the M7. Follow the Collectors' Plant Fair signs on Bells Line of Road. Parking, refreshments and garden open from 8.30am. Stalls will not open until 9.00am.

There will be a plant-holding area with drive-to pick up, and a shuttle-bus will take people and plants to coaches. Weekend Entry \$10, \$6 if pre-booked (under 18's free entry with an adult) Speaker Sessions \$20. Free parking. Twenty-five percent of proceeds go to the Bilpin Bush Fire Brigade who assist on the day.

For further information and bookings contact:

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## Australian Natives

February and March can produce all kinds of weather changes and coping with that can be a challenge for orchid growers. We grow our plants in small containers making them totally dependent on us for their well-being so we need to be able to adapt our growing conditions to suit the plants, and that involves trying to beat nature to a certain degree.

February in temperate Australia can be anything from very hot and dry to very hot and humid along the coast – you know, sticky and steamy with little air movement. There can also be very welcome southerly changes. They produce a sudden chill which can damage some plants as well as sudden and severe thunderstorms which can do a lot more damage, particularly if there is hail. Check there are no tree branches overhanging your collection that are weakened by borers or anything else and get them removed before they are broken in strong winds. After a storm, check your plants for any damage. Repot any that may have been knocked over and had media lost and look for broken pseudobulbs and leaves. Remove the damaged bits remembering that a pseudobulb will continue to produce new growths from its base if that is left intact. Check for damage to the covering of your growing area and repair it or the next storm may do more damage.

March can be hot, but can also see the first frosts in inland areas. Add to this the potential for drought breaking flood rain and it's easy to see why growers have to keep their wits about them.

Hopefully there will be rain to give growers some relief from water restrictions. Try to make the most of it. Remember that sealed houses don't get the benefit of rain and will quickly dry out in the still warm conditions. You will need to be sure to water them even if it does manage to rain. Keep the fans running for these next few months but also check the heaters are ready and working as they may be needed at any time. The autumn flowering natives produce buds now. As many are of tropical origin or have parents that are, they can be sensitive to sudden cold snaps in temperate areas which cause bud drop.

Hot, humid conditions are perfect for creating fungal and bacterial problems. Soft new growths can fill with water and rot off, damaged leaves develop black areas and roots can rot in soggy mix. Plenty of air movement between plants will allow them to dry between wet spells and the best way is to avoid overcrowding – but who wants to have spare bench space when there is room for another native orchid? If things get bad use a fungicide. Just be sure to get the correct one as many are specific as to what they will control.

Repotting should be completed by now as root growth will slow and the plants may not establish themselves in the pot before winter. However, that doesn't mean you ignore any urgent cases. A bit of work now could save the plant. Look for any plants that have not grown well over summer. There should be nice, lush new growths reaching maturity. Some plants might go for a second lot of growths.

Continue with the fertiliser while the plants are still actively growing. A change to a bloom boosting formula is a good idea as it will get the plants ready for spring flowering. Always keep the fertiliser dilute. More won't make the plants grow faster; it will just burn the roots and cause

souring of the potting media by creating a salt build up that needs a lot of water to flush out.

When the heat drops it is a good time to deflask seedlings. There will be enough warmth to get them established before winter. Be sure to keep up the water and very dilute fertiliser. You can choose to plant them in community pots or in single seedling pots. This will depend somewhat on the size of the seedlings and the space and protection you can offer them. Seedlings are usually covered in a terrarium like environment to reduce the chances of dehydration after the shock of removal from the flask. They will then produce new growths which need to be hardened to

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## CULTURAL NOTES

their outdoor growing conditions by gradual removal of the protection. Sarcanthinae simply harden off the existing growths and produce new leaves and roots while dendrobiums produce new pseudobulbs and roots. Community pots save room and the seedlings seem to like to continue to grow in each others company. They have to be watched as strong growing plants can dominate the pot and kill off the weaker ones. Maybe this is what you want to select just the strongest plants. Individual pots are time consuming to set up and need more care to get the plants growing. An advantage is that they don't have their roots disturbed again when they outgrow the pot.

Many of the terrestrial orchids begin their growth at this time of year with the tiny leaves popping out of the potting mix. Any repotting should have been completed by now.

The natives in bloom or coming into bud now include a large number of species and hybrids with very varied blooms. The well-known *Dendrobium bigibbum* and its hybrids, *D. schneiderae*, *Bulbophyllum exiguum*, *B. schillerianum*, *B. weinthalii*, *Dockrillia bowmanni* and *Liparis* species are just a few of the huge variety of natives that normally bloom at this time.

### Cattleyas

During the summer period most Cattleyas are in full growth. Warm days and nights certainly push your plants along. New roots are appearing and growths are on the move. If your plants are overgrown you may think about dividing and or repotting into a larger pot. Remember, when repotting catts only use PORT POTS the orchid growers pot! These pots are shallow with plenty of drainage holes. Cattleyas can be repotted in just about any media. I have seen Cattleyas growing very well in a cymbidium mixture. As long as the mix drains well and does not get soggy, Cattleyas will grow quite well. After potting, please stake your plants. That is, most bulbs should be staked and tied top and bottom of the bulb, so as the bulb will not move when you are watering your plants. If dividing this time of the year, it is a good idea to spray your plants with ENVY® to stop water loss from within the plant. A drench with AUXINONE® will help the plants develop a good root system.

DO NOT OVER WATER your newly potted plants. Depending on where you live, you may only need to water weekly.

Plants just potted will not need fertiliser for some weeks. Once you see roots appearing you could fertilise with an organic such as MAJOR CARP® or a new product that has now become available is GROWTH'S LIQUID BLOOD AND BONE. What I have seen so far is that

growths seem to have a greener colour with good root development.

Check plants for scale infections. If present spray with ANTI-SCALE® or ECO OIL®. Fungal diseases are not a problem during the summer months.

### Cymbidiums

Spikes are starting to appear!! Yes, it won't be long and the season will be with us.

If possible, water in the early evening.

Check for two-spotted miters under leaves. If present, spray with your favourite miticide. If you have a small collection, spray with PEST OIL or ECO OIL. These two oils work very well. BUT do not spray if the weather is above 30 degrees Celsius. You could mix some MANCOZEB with the oil for leaf spot diseases.

If you are experiencing bulb rot on new leaf rot, drench with ANTI-ROT® or AGRIFOS 600. You may need a couple of applications, five to seven days apart. Apply at label rate.

Fertilise weekly with PETERS EXCEL Cal Mag Hi K or PETERS BLOSSOM BOOSTER.

A monthly application of calcium is required for developing racemes. You can use many forms of calcium but I prefer the use of BIOMIN CALCIUM. Must be used on its own at 0.5 grams per litre of water.

### Paphiopedilum

The weather is normally hot and, particularly during February, quite humid. If you haven't taken precautions against mealy bug and scale, keep an eye out. Scale usually only becomes a problem in collections which have been neglected and can usually be traced to host plants, often ferns. Mealy bugs, on the other hand, can appear almost out of the blue and you can have a major infestation before you notice it. Both these pests can be controlled with 'Mealscale'; repeat spraying may be necessary.

Care of paphs. during this period of the year consists mainly of routine watering and the regular application of soluble fertiliser as advised previously, still taking care to avoid overwatering. When the nights are hot it is better to water during the evening to induce a temperature drop about nightfall; this will assist promote flowering and, in my experience, help avoid deformed flowers.

Excessively high temperatures should be avoided by whatever means you have at your disposal. In the bush house, shading and simple misting of the plants is all that can practically be done; natural air



movement usually avoids problems under these conditions.

Glass houses can present problems with excessive heat during summer, particularly if they are small. An adequately sized evaporative cooler is a very useful, albeit costly, device for creating good summer growing conditions in the glasshouse. The cooler must be so installed that it draws fresh air from outside – recirculation is useless. Sufficient ventilation should be provided at the top of the house to ensure that the cooler operates without back pressure. A simple thermostat, set at about 28

degrees Celsius, is sufficient control; this may need to be wired through a relay.

In the absence of an evaporative cooler, summer temperature control is best achieved by a combination of ventilation, shading and misting. Whilst shade cloth over, and some distance away from, the glass helps with cooling – and can conveniently be removed during the cooler months – a thin coat of white paint in addition is almost always necessary. A vinyl water base paint, thinned with three or four times its volume of water, is very suitable. Don't use an acrylic paint, it is almost impossible to remove.

## Phalaenopsis

Keep the humidity up to your plants. On hot days damp down under benches and pathways. Watering is not the main problem during the summer period – it is the humidity in the growing house. If you can keep it around 70% the plants will be very happy.

Fertilise weekly with a good fertiliser such as MAJOR CARP®. This will promote a good root system and good solid leaves. Make sure the fertiliser goes right through the growing media.

It is a good idea to give your plants a spray with ECO-OIL® to check the control of Mealy Bug. Remember, mealy bug breed down in the growing media. A maintenance spray with MANCOZEB will help control leaf spot during the summer period, or a spray with HYSAN®.

Repot if needed.

## Vandaceous

**Watering:**– Don't allow to dry out. Water thoroughly every day. In very hot dry conditions water in early mornings and mist again late afternoon.

**Light:**– Strap leaf vandas, ascocendas and other vandaceous genera with wide leaves require 50% to 70% shade although semi-terete and other narrow leaf types will be okay with 30%.

**Fertiliser:**– Do not fertilise dry plants. Always water beforehand. Fertilise weekly alternating over a 4 weekly cycle as follows–

**Wk.1.** – Inorganic low Nitrogen  
– Campbells A., Flowfeed HP8.

– or Aqua K.

**Wk.2.** – Wuxall Folair.

**Wk.3.** – Inorganic low Nitrogen – as for wk.1.

**Wk.4.** – Organic – Fish emulsion or Nitrogen.

**Pest Control:**– Fungicide every 6 weeks (e.g. Daconil, Wettable Sulphur or Ridomil MZ WP).

Use Diazanon, Malathion or Pyrethrum to control insects.

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# The Spectacular Singapore Orchid Show and Garden Festival

by Thelma Keith

While my husband and I were sitting in a shopping centre in early November 2006 doing some voluntary work for 'Temperance Day', we were lightly reading through the latest orchid magazines when we came upon a colourful *Spatulata Dendrobium* full page advertisement on the inside cover of *Orchids*. This advertisement was headed Singapore Orchid Show 2006. In smaller print underneath was 16-25 December 2006, held at the Suntec International Convention & Exhibition Centre.

I said to him "Let's go"! Mick has been of recent years wishing to go back to Singapore at least once more in his lifetime. He has already been there four times over the years. We have lovely orchid friends in Singapore, hence the interest. He wanted to go there last year but we were heading in a different direction – to Canada, Alaska and North America via Japan. We once again caught up with Frank and Ruth Shride (of Beal's Orchids Seattle) as we were agents for them in Australia. They are now retired as we are and we had a lovely stay with them and a great time together.

"Now is the time", I said, to go to another Singapore Orchid Show and see our orchid friends not only from Singapore but perhaps other Asian business friends, we used to import from over the many years. After a little hesitation he agreed and the next day I was on the phone to our family travel agent. We left from Cairns via Darwin at 2pm on 15th December and arrived in Singapore at 8.40pm Singapore time.

Everything from then on went as we

expected and on the morning of 16th December after a good breakfast we walked across from our hotel 'Pan Pacific' through double doors on the second floor to the second level of the 'Suntec' building and then escalators to the fourth floor and the orchid show.

We once again met up with our good friends Dudley and Rita Leicester. (Dudley was Secretary of the OSSEA when we first met in 1978) They are now retired as all our friends are. We were so pleased to go home with them and out to dinner and the Cricket Club with Dudley and his friends. We have kept in touch at Christmas time each year.

We met up with all the people we expected to meet and some Australian friends also. Our Australian Orchid Judging Registrar, Col Jennings and his wife from South Australia plus a group from NSW. We had met all of these people at the AOC Conference in Port Macquarie in July 2006. It was great to see them all.

The Show was officially opened and the Singapore Orchid Show Prize Presentation Ceremony began at 10.30am on stage. The presentation of all trophies and prizes was very interesting with many silver cups etc. I was told last time that some of these cups were very old and of solid silver and they looked very striking. The Grand Champion Orchid of the show was *Dendrobium* (Masako Taki x *lasianthera*)

To say that this show was spectacular was almost an understatement. We were told that it was three times as large as usual and of this I am sure. We were at our first Singapore Orchid Show in September, 1981. My story of this "Magnificent

Singapore Orchid Show" was published in the March 1982 issue of the *Australian Orchid Review* and was later picked up in the OSSEA publication. We were members of OSSEA then and have since rejoined.

This Garden Festival was on two levels of the Suntec Exhibition Centre. The spectacular orchid show was on the fourth level. The sixth level which was reached via escalators was mind blowing with Landscape Gardens, Fantasy Gardens, Floral Windows to the World and General Displays. Highlights also included Competitions, Free vouchers to the Singapore Orchid Gardens, \$2 vouchers off purchases at the show. There were specially designed and created gardens by local and international top award-winning designers from renowned garden shows around the world. By simply voting for your favourite display you could win a 'Hyundai Avante' on show in a garden display of its own.

"Talks in the Garden" were staged on Level 4. Speakers included Dr. Yam Tim Wing (who was at the 1998 APOC conference in Townsville) and Australia's Jamie Durie. There were talks on every subject from Garden Tales and Craft for Kids, Floral Art for Occasions. International Garden Hour, Garden Guru, Ikebana and in fact too many to mention here. The Floral Art had a large work section and everyone watched as they created and then displayed. As usual the children were represented and from school age are encouraged. They had their own display and I was impressed.

The grand idea of attending the Singapore Garden Festival was a great experience. Although we did not go to France, I believe they had done similar at the WOC in 2005. In today's age I feel the showing of our beautiful orchids together with other plants of the world enhance and ensure a spectacular event. We have been to many World and National Conferences over the years and I would say this was as good as the best or better. Despite the rain, more than 111,000 people were counted by the end of the fourth day. (7 million live in Singapore) We love Singapore and its lush greenery.

Thelma Keith

Townsville, Queensland

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# Malaysia – Orchids by the Million!

Text and photos by Murray Shergold

**T**his year, 2007, sees the celebration of 50 years nationhood in Malaysia. Yes it is already 50 years since the breakup of Malaya, the British colony to form dynamic Singapore and magnificent Malaysia. The Malaysian government has stated it wants to celebrate in a big way and part of the celebration is the Johor International Orchid Show to be held 24-27 May 2007. This event is one of the 50 biggest events in Malaysia this year.

Last years show claimed to have 5,000 different varieties of orchids on show and attracted over 300,000 visitors to Danga Bay. This feat was recorded in the *Malaysian Guinness Book of Records* for the Biggest Orchid Landscape (Outdoor

Category). The exhibition is jointly organised by Johor Baru City Council (MBJB), the State Government, State Tourism Action Council, Johor Association of State Assemblymen's Wives (Juita) and the State Orchid Association. Malaysia is the second biggest orchid exporter in the world after Thailand.

In 2005, the orchid exports stood at RM36 million with Johor contributing nearly 90% of the output.

The Johor show covers an amazing 10 acres – yes it is much bigger than any World Orchid Conference and all held outside under the shade of the trees right by the Straights of Singapore.

Orchid growing is a power industry in Malaysia and is well supported by their government. In previous years there have been some 18 countries represented and this year the target is 25. Each country will have a huge display at the Danga Bay site carrying their own countries flag. In addition there will be displays from Malaysian and Singaporian clubs, universities, schools, orchid societies, municipal councils, common interest groups and individuals. Last years show had more than 100 displays and this year the number will grow substantially we hear.

Unlike Australia where we struggle to justify calling ourselves an industry, orchid growing in Malaysia is a large





Above: *Dendrobium* Stardust 'Fire Bird'



Left: *Paraphalaenopsis* Kimi

export earner, bringing millions of Ringgit into the country each year through both cut flower and pot plant varieties.

Of course, there is a bench show for individual plant competition and as is standard in much of Asia the grouping of plants and cut flowers for competition in groups of three and five different genera that is, to us from down under, very different. Once again there will be competitive displays in shopping centres and hotel lobbies around the city of Johor and also involvement by the local schools.

The general level of involvement in this show by the community is something we in Australia should be aiming for as we have nothing to compare...even in the most orchid oriented city in Australia, Townsville.

It is expected there will be more than 100 vendors in the sales area and it is usual for vendors to be selling not just orchids but many other Malaysian plant oddities as well that are not seen down under. The sales area is usually a buzz with activity and has new and different





Above: Johor university display

Right: *Renanthera philippinensis*

species on offer.

From the show site at Danga Bay the causeway to Singapore is just five minutes, the city shopping centre less than ten minutes and the orchid farms a scant 1/2 an hour. These orchid farms are a sight to behold, some around 200 acres each. On any one farm you can see *Dendrobiums*, *Cattleyas*, *Vandas*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Paraphalaenopsis*, *Arachnis*, *Arandas*, *Ascocendas*, and more.

The Malaysians celebrate in grand style and attendees from Australia will be invited to be part of the dinner at the Chief Ministers residence the night before the event starts. Not just will folk be fed the best Malaysian food available but they will be entertained by the most professional of traditional Malaysian dancers and singers who will perform live in front of the diners.

Aussies will also attend the Official Opening Ceremony, conducted right on the waterfront, overlooking Singapore and held in the grandest temporary buildings you can imagine. The pomp and cer-







**Above:** *Dendrobium* (new hardcane breeding)



**Left:** *Vanda Sansai Blue*

emony is legendary but not overdone by any measure. It is normal for a new hybrid to be named in honour of a local dignitary...and what a great idea this is...why do not we copy this in Australia? The opening is performed by the Chief Minister of Johor State and can be expected to include brass bands and traditional singing and dancing.

Based on previous similar shows more than 300,000 people are likely to attend over the four days...how different is this from such shows in Australia? Malaysia is a friendly and safe place to visit, with it's tropical climate being a highlight, along with a great diversity of population and food and all at prices that are very economical to Aussies on holiday.

Easy Orchids are hosting a tour to Malaysia with this Johor International Orchid Show being the key event. They tell us that after attending the show and other attractions in Johor Bahru they will also visit world famous Kota Kinabulu in Sabah state, Kuching in Borneo and the cool Cameron Highlands seeing orchids in all places. Easy Orchids have arranged a special program working with their



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## ORCHIDS

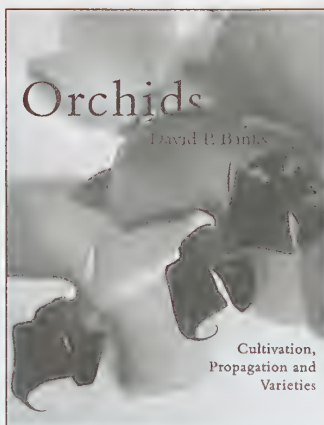
*Cultivation, Propagation and Varieties*

by David P. Banks

"Orchids" is an irresistible volume for all orchid lovers that offers practical advice to ensure no more flowerless stalks, no more browned and brittle leaves and no more dead and dying plants. Indeed, "Orchids" offers rare insights and comprehensive advice on how to keep your orchids vibrant and beautifully healthy.

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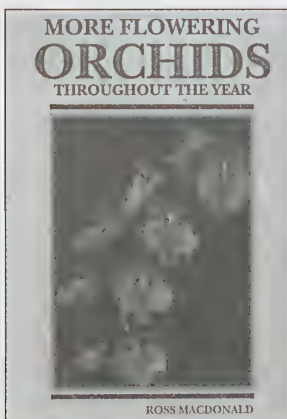
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## MORE FLOWERING ORCHIDS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

by Ross Macdonald

This is the sister volume to Cool Flowering Orchids throughout the Year. It is in the same format and style as the previous book, but also includes some genera that would require artificial heating in cooler climates. This volume covers a further 314 orchid species and hybrids with 344 colour plates. Both texts are highly recommend to all orchid fanciers; particularly newcomers who wish to see an array of delightful flowers that they could grow.

132 pp.  
242mm x 168mm  
Softcover.



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## COOL FLOWERING ORCHIDS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

by Ross Macdonald

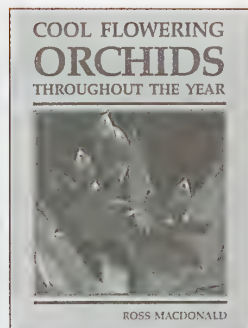
Ross Macdonald is a highly respected orchid grower and photographer from the North Island of New Zealand. This volume is devoted to cool growing orchid genera, which are easy to cultivate in New Zealand and southern Australia. Growers in tropical areas should not be discouraged, as many of these orchids are indeed adaptable and will grow in a range of climates. Andy Easton has written the foreword. Ross has devoted the first few pages of the book to cultural hints, which are down to earth and give practical information on the basics of orchid cultivation.

Basically this is a pictorial book with over 300 full colour photographs, covering a similar number of orchid species and hybrids. The quality of both the photographs and the colour reproduction is impressive. All of the orchids have been captured using available sunlight and there is no flash photography. There is a wide range of orchid genera covered with particular emphasis placed on cymbidiums, dendrobiums, laelias, masdevallias, the Odonoglossum alliance and Paphiopedilum.

The photographs are arranged in four chapters, referring on their main blooming season. The use of seasons ensures the text is also applicable to growers in the northern hemisphere.

This inexpensive book is exceptional value and importantly is written by someone who knows and grows these orchids. I thoroughly recommend this book to orchid growers, as it will be of great value to both novice and experienced enthusiasts.

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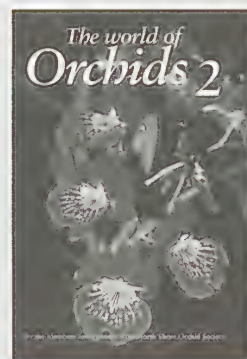
## THE WORLD OF ORCHIDS - 2

The World of Orchids - 2 has been written by members and friends of the North Shore Orchid Society about orchids grown in Sydney and its environs, and we are indebted to those people for their time and effort.

It has been produced to cover a large range of genera to help not only the novice, but also the experienced grower in their present fields of interest, and to tempt and encourage them to try other genera.

It should be pointed out that the methods of culture used by the authors are those which they themselves have found successful. Growers should try any changes to their own culture gradually and on a few plants first, as orchids respond differently under different conditions.

80 pages, colour and B&W.



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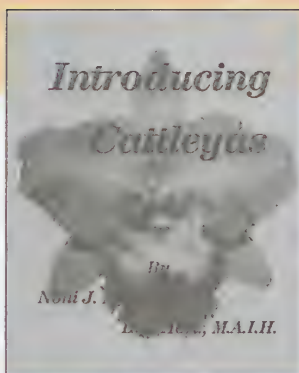


## INTRODUCING CATTLEYAS

*Noni J. Mammatt*

Noni Mammatt's fascination with the Cattleya Alliance, their most beautiful blooms and extensive range of colour combinations, has prompted Noni to share the results of her own trials in successfully growing and flowering all types of this most beautiful genus under shade-house conditions in the city of Perth in Western Australia. She hopes that as a result of her writing some new growers, as well as the experienced growers of other orchid genera, may be encouraged to introduce the Cattleya Alliance into their collections.

**24 pages, B&W.**



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## GROWING PHALAENOPSIS AT HOME

*James Neal*

This book is essential reading and reference for any person who grows, or is intending to grow, Phalaenopsis.

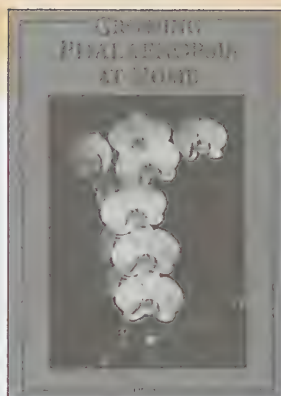
Jim, in a simple and easily understood style, explains and elaborates on light conditions, watering, temperatures, fertilisers, pests and diseases.

Explanations of the way Phalaenopsis are named and the implications of growing seedlings, illustrate some of the more difficult ideas for the layman to understand.

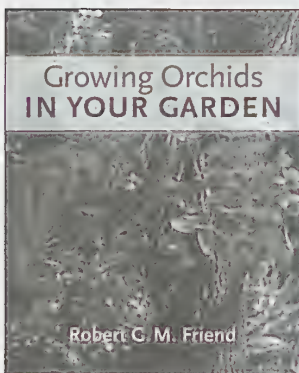
The colour photography illustrates beautifully the topics under discussion and the orchid names are supplied, where necessary, as a caption.

The illustrations drawn by Jim's son Jamie are pertinent and succinct and make the subject more easily understood.

**56 pages, colour and B&W.**



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## GROWING ORCHIDS IN YOUR GARDEN

*by Robert Friend*

Just about wherever you live in the world, you can grow orchids in your garden. In this exciting book, Robert Friend shows gardeners how to introduce orchids into the garden by attaching them to trees, fixing them to rocks and walls, or planting them directly into garden beds.

He has traveled the world from Florida to the cool forests of North America, to the tropics of the Pacific Rim and to his origins in Australasia, searching for new ideas and new ways to cultivate these striking plants.

The author details more than 500 orchid choices for every garden situation and supplies practical cultivation information in thorough charts and tables.

Growing Orchids in Your Garden offers an array of dramatic ideas for every reader.

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## SARCOCHILUS ORCHIDS OF AUSTRALIA

*Walter T. Upton*

Sarcophilus Orchids of Australia is the first book to cover all aspects of species of the genus Sarcophilus. Compact plants of great floral beauty with ease of culture, they are mostly cool to cold growing, requiring limited space, and for these reasons are quickly becoming the orchid of the future.

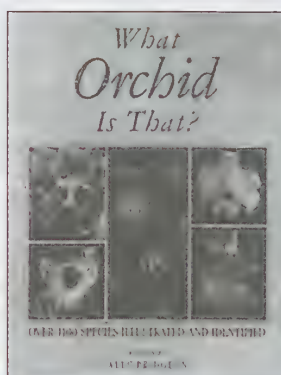
The book gives each individual species a separate entry, with information on its history, synonyms, distribution, habitat, cultivation and hybrids, along with a drawing showing the main parts of the plant and flower, plus a colour plate providing an easy means of identification.

Hybridising, including intergenerics, is dealt with in detail - most registered hybrids being accompanied by a colour plate. Other chapters include pollination, seed raising and cultural information for the home grower.

This is Walter T. Upton's third book and is a companion to his very popular and informative Dendrobium Orchids of Australia.

**119 pages, colour and B&W.**

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## WHAT ORCHID IS THAT?

*Edited by Alec Pridgeon*

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This book will delight everyone, from the gardener with a casual interest in orchids, to the confirmed enthusiast. It takes in a wide spectrum of orchid genera and more than 1100 species common in cultivation, presented by an international team of experts.

The first section, by the General Editor, Alec Pridgeon, introduces orchid habitat, distribution, names and classification, hybrids, pollination, how to grow orchids and control pests and diseases, and orchid conservation.

The alphabetical section, "Orchids A-Z", includes descriptions, names and synonyms, geographic distribution, notes on culture, and photographs drawn from collections around the world, showing the best-known species in cultivation.

Whether you are buying, growing or just looking, this is the ultimate guide to orchids.

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local friends and using their experience from many visits to Malaysia in years gone by.

Following the visit to Johor to the orchid show, the orchid farms, and other attractions in Johor, Easy Orchids say they will fly to Kota Kinabulu in Sabah State, East Malaysia.

Next day the group will transfer to Kinabalu Park – located 4,095m above sea level, where there are over 1,000 species of orchids nestled in jungles amidst the gentle flowing streams. The two-hour journey to Base Camp will take you over the Crocker Range with a fascinating view of Mt. Kinabalu. A nature tour in the mountain garden and at the Park, there are many jungle trails to explore on your own, the tour will also visit Poring Hot Springs (45 minutes drive from Kinabalu Park) – to view the orchids and animals at the Poring Orchid Conservation Centre where *Dimorphorchis lowii* is a feature. This species is particularly interesting as it has female and male flowers on the one raceme. Travelling up the mountain there will be opportunity to stop and visit the roadside vendors and take in the new species now found in the local jungle.

Next day will provide an opportunity to travel for approximately three hours to Tenom, where orchids abound in the



Enjoying the great food

research centre. Fifteen kilometres from Tenom town is the Sabah Agricultural Park, a newly upgraded development by the Sabah State Government for research as well as tourism. Located at Lagud Sebrang, the park extends over 1,500

acres! This is also where you can visit the Tenom Orchid Farm, with over 1,000 indigenous orchids. The place has been developed into a highly interesting and educational agro-tourism park.

From there, the tour will take folk to

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Above: Competition display

Below: Display with Dragonfly







Above: Competition display

Below: Competition display







**Above:** 200 acre orchid farm



**Left:** Thai Vanda display

Kuching to visit a newly established orchid garden and to the famous Coachwoods nursery where even *Paphiopedilum sanderianum* may be legally purchased. This is a long established and very large nursery and the best of Borneo's species may be viewed and purchased there.

To provide a stark contrast the tour will fly back to West Malaysia and travel high into the Cameron Highlands where cool conditions prevail and a whole different range of orchids abound. The tour will have the benefit of the knowledge of Krishna Rajendren, a renowned Malaysian commercial grower to provide local insight and help with species identification. All in all, Aussies have an opportunity to visit a wonderful safe and orchid rich country to see the best on offer at a show and in the wild.

**Murray Shergold**  
**Easy Orchids**  
**Woodburn, NSW**  
[www.easyorchids.com](http://www.easyorchids.com)



# THE LOST LABEL

by Brian Milligan

There's nothing sadder than an orchid without a label, except perhaps a lost puppy without a collar! The plant is usually relegated to a spot in the furthest corner of the shade-house, where it suffers from a lack of air movement and regular watering, which in turn predisposes it to attack by scale and red spider mites.

The grower's hope is that, when the orchid next flowers, it may be identified. This may be possible if it's a division of one of his or her other plants, or if it's a species orchid or well known hybrid. Otherwise, the orchid stands little chance of identification, and its usual fate is to join other orchids destined for the sales bench at one of our shows – most members of the public are not interested in an orchid's name, apart from the genus (*Cymbidium*, *Dendrobium* etc.).

An unnamed orchid is of limited value to any member interested in displaying his or her orchids on the show bench at our meetings or shows. Most judging rules state that unnamed orchids should not receive a first prize in their class, and in practice (unless they are of high quality), they are unlikely to receive a second or third place. An unnamed orchid can therefore, in principle, never win Best in Section. New growers are still advised to bench their unnamed orchids, because

they may be quality plants that the judges are able to identify. But if the judges ignore your illegitimate orchid, then you may as well dispose of it to make room for another of known lineage.

Orchid hybrids are said to be the only members of the plant kingdom for which a complete family tree is known, and orchid devotees are therefore determined to preserve that record, which is maintained by a committee of the Royal Horticultural Society. The judging rule that unnamed orchids should never be given a first prize is designed to discourage their cultivation. For the same reason unknown orchids should never be used for breeding purposes, and names for all worthwhile progeny bred from known parents should be registered.

So, take great care not to lose an orchid's label when re-potting, and always label every division you make. I find that labels are easily lost during wild weather.

Some of my pots are inevitably toppled over during wind storms, and I have learned by experience, having uprighted the pot, to look for the label, which may have fallen beneath the wire mesh bench.

Of course, there are some events that can't be foreseen, like the occasion when an orchid grower sent his noisy granddaughter outside to play. Eventually she returned, gleefully telling Grandpa what she had found – a handful of carefully gathered orchid labels!

Showtime is another occasion when plant labels are sometimes lost through no fault of the grower. Naïve show patrons have been known to remove the labels from prize winners, so that they can show them to the sales staff in the hope of finding an identical orchid in the sales area! Sadly, few illegally removed labels find their way back to their original homes. For this reason, some growers put two identical labels in their pots, the second one pressed down out of sight beneath the compost as a smart insurance policy.

**PLANT LABELS ARE IMPORTANT! ■**

Brian Milligan  
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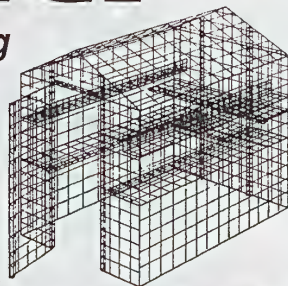
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DATE	TIME	SEASON	ORCHID SOCIETY	SHOW ADDRESS
<b>New South Wales</b>				
29-30 March	Shopping Centre Hours Half Day Saturday	Autumn	Coffs Harbour OS Autumn Show	Palms Centre Park Avenue, Coffs Harbour
5-18 April	9.30am-7.00pm	Autumn	Orchid Society of NSW Royal Easter Show	Horticultural Pavilion Homebush Showgrounds, Homebush
12-13 April- 14 April	Shopping Centre Hours Close 2.00pm	Autumn	City of Lismore OS Autumn Show	Lismore Central Shopping Centre Carrington Street, Lismore
25-28 April	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Newcastle OS Autumn Show	Edgeworth Town Mall Newcastle
9-11 May	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Grafton District OS Grafton Autumn Orchid Show	Grafton Shoppingworld Grafton
10-11 May 12 May	9.00am-4.00pm 9.00am-3.00pm	Autumn	Nambucca Valley OS Autumn Orchid Show	Scout Hall Partridge Street, Macksville
10-13 May	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Ballina & District OS	Ballina Fair Shopping Centre Ballina
11-13 May	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Western Suburbs OS Autumn Show	Strathfield Plaza Strathfield
17-19 May	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Hawkesbury & District OS	Richmond Market Place March Street, Richmond
19-20 May	Club Hours	Autumn	Macleay Valley OS	South West Rocks Country Club South West Rocks
24-25 May 26 May	9.00am-5.00pm 8.30am-1.00pm	Autumn	Casino & District OS Autumn Orchid Show	Presbyterian Hall Hickey Street, Casino (Fire Station street)
24-25 May 26 May	8.30am-9.00pm 8.30am-4.00pm	Autumn	Tweed District OS Autumn Show	Tweed City Shopping Centre Minjungbal Drive, Tweed Heads South
27-30 June	Shopping Centre Hours	Winter	Newcastle OS Winter Show	Stockland Glendale
12-15 July	Shopping Centre Hours	Winter	Campbelltown & District OS	McArthur Shopping Square Kellicar Road, Campbelltown
<b>Queensland</b>				
10-11 February	9.00am-4.00pm	Summer	Aspley OS Summer Show	Auditorium Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens, Toowong

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## SHOWDATES

DATE	TIME	SEASON	ORCHID SOCIETY	SHOW ADDRESS
24 February	8.30am-4.00pm	Autumn	Beaudesert Dist Orc & Foliage	Woodhill Community Hall
25 February	9.00am-3.00pm		25th Anniversary Show	Mount Lindesay Highway, Woodhill
1-3 March	8.00am-9.00pm	Autumn	Gold Coast OS	Pines Shopping Centre
			Autumn Show	Elanora, Gold Coast, Queensland
16-17 March	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Southport & Districts OS	Oasis Shopping Centre
			Orchid Festival & Trade Fair	Broadbeach, Queensland
17 March	9.00am-5.00pm	Autumn	Maroochydore OS	St Marks Hall
			(Members Only)	Main Street, Buderim
17 March	8.30am-4.30pm	Autumn	Eastern Districts OS	Wondall Heights State School, Assembly Hall
18 March	8.30am-3.30pm		EDOS Autumn Show	Wondall Road, Manly West, Brisbane
24 March	9.00am-3.00pm	Autumn	Childers & Isis District OS	Childers Cultural Centre
			Autumn Charity Show	Churchill Street, Childers
29-31 March	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Mackay & District OS	Mt Pleasant/Greenfields Shopping Centre
			Autumn Show	Mackay
31 March	8.30am-4.00pm	Autumn	Redlands OS	Donald Simpson Leisure Centre
			Autumn Charity Show	Cnr Russell & Bloomfield Streets, Cleveland
6-8 April	9.00am-4.00pm	Autumn	Queensland OS	Auditorium
			Autumn Show	Botanic Gardens, Mt Coot-tha, Brisbane
7 April	8.30am-5.00pm	Autumn	Bribie Island OS	Indoor Bowls Club Hall
			Orchid Display & Market Day	First Avenue, Bribie Island
12-14 April	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Pine Rivers OS	Deception Bay Shopping Centre
			PROS Autumn Show	Deception bay Road
12-13 April	9.00am-9.00pm	Autumn	North Queensland OS – Cairns	Raintrees Shopping Centre
14 April	9.00am-1.00pm		NQOS – Cairns Autumn Show	Alfred Street, Manunda, Cairns
13-14 April	9.00am-5.00pm	Autumn	Townsville OS	Townsville Orchid Society Inc Hall
15 April	9.00am-4.00pm		Autumn Show	Joe Kirwan Park, Charles Street, Kirwan
14-15 April	8.00am-4.00pm	Autumn	West Brisbane OS	Brisbane Botanic Gardens Auditorium
			WBOS Autumn Show	Mt Coot-tha
20 April	9.00am-4.00pm	Autumn	Sunshine Coast OS – Caloundra	Caloundra Uniting Church Hall
21 April	9.00am-3.00pm		"Orchids in April 2007"	Cnr Queen and Ulm Streets, Caloundra
20 April	8.30am-4.00pm	Autumn	Ipswich OS	Bundamba Primary School Hall
21 April	8.30am-2.00pm		Autumn Show	Brisbane Road, Bundamba
4-7 May	9.00am-4.00pm	Autumn	Darling Downs Orchid Society	Walshs Seeds
			Autumn Show	Ruthven Street, Toowoomba
5 May	8.30am-5.00pm	Autumn	Gympie & District OS	"The Pavilion"
6 May	8.30am-2.30pm		Cooloola Garden Expo	Gympie Showgrounds, Gympie
10-11 May	9.00am-9.00pm	Winter	North Queensland OS – Cairns	Mt Sheridan Shopping Centre
11 May	9.00am-1.00pm		Mothers Day Show	106 Barnard Drive, White Rock
10-12 May	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Pine Rivers OS	Taigum Shopping Centre
			PROS Mothers Day Show	
11 May	8.30am-5.00pm	Autumn	Noosa Dist Orc & Foliage Soc	CWA Hall
12 May	8.30am-3.00pm		Noosa Mothers Day Show	Main Street, Cooroy
			(Closed – members only)	
11-12 May	8.00am-4.00pm	Autumn	Bundaberg OS	Civic centre
13 May	8.30am-1.00pm		Annual Autumn Show	Bourbong Street, Bundaberg
12-13 May	9.00am-4.00pm	Autumn	Aspley OS	Community Hall
			Mothers Day Show	Edinburgh Castle Road, Wavell Heights
13 May	11.00am-3.00pm	Autumn	Proserpine Orchid & Foliage	Cannonvale State School
			Plant Soc – Mothers Day Fete	Cannonvale Beach
9-10 June	TBA	Winter	TQOC	Lannercost Street
			42nd TQOC Conference	Ingham, North Queensland
29-31 June	Shopping Centre Hours	Winter	Mackay & District OS	Mt Pleasant/Greenfields Shopping Centre
			Autumn Show	Mackay
<b>Victoria</b>				
26-27 May	9.00am-5.00pm	Autumn	Maribyrnong OS	Maribyrnong Community Centre
			Autumn Show	Randall Street, Maribyrnong
21-22 July	10.00am-4.30pm	Winter	Geelong Orchid & Indoor Plant	Christchurch Hall
			Winter Show	Cnr Moorabool & McKillop Streets, Geelong
<b>South Australia</b>				
30 June	12 noon-5.00pm	Autumn	SA Orchidaceous Society	Klemzig Community Hall
1 July	9.00am-4.00pm		Autumn	O.G. Road, Klemzig
<b>Western Australia</b>				
24-26 May	Shopping Centre Hours	Autumn	Wanneroo OS	Warwick Glove S/c
			Autumn Show	Beach Road, Warwick
<b>Northern Territory</b>				
2 June	9.00am-5.00pm	Winter	Litchfield OS	Mararra Indoor Stadium
3 June	10.00am-5.00pm		NT Orchid Spectacular	Abala Road, Mararra
<b>New Zealand</b>				
14 April	1.00pm-3.00pm	Autumn	Auckland Orchid Club	Hobsonville Hall
				Hobsonville Road, Waitakere City





# Cymbidiums Australia

PRESENTED BY THE AUSTRALIAN CYMBIDIUM SOCIETY INC.

## Editor's Report

Welcome to yet another new year – they seem to come round much more quickly these days, possibly something to do with getting older. We hope that you are all reading this under conditions much improved from those prevailing at the time of writing (mid- December). As we prepare this issue most of Australia is still in the grip of sustained and crippling drought and large parts of Victoria and Tasmania are being consumed by some of the worst bush fires experienced in recent years. These events put our concerns about good or bad flowering seasons, the inconvenience of water restrictions, and other cymbidium related matters, into some sort of perspective and we can only hope that if good rains haven't given some relief by now, then they won't be too far away. Isn't it hope and optimism that keeps us going? Whether it's a belief that the rains will eventually come, or that this flowering season will be better than last year's, the human spirit always seems to find the will to go forward. We are enthusiastic that your magazine will also go forward this year and, as readers and subscribers you can expect to see a greater input from the ACS member states as new state-based assistant editors come on board to increase the number of reports and articles from across the country. There is no better source of information about what's happening from state to state than reports from people on the spot.

This issue brings us the results of the 2006 SAGE Cymbidium Seedling of the Year competition, judged last November, and includes another batch of promising new and largely Australian hybrids. Once

again the SAGE proves that we can be very enthusiastic about the quality of Australian hybridizing, with some exciting results across all size classes and types. Congratulations go to this year's overall winner and all class winners. Pictures and descriptions of all the entries are included as usual and we're sure you will agree that the flowers which make up this year's SAGE make a convincing case for growing seedlings among your *Cymbidium* collection.

The Australian Cymbidium Society has included news on changes and initiatives that have resulted from the 2006 Delegates Meeting and Annual General Meeting. A report from the ACS President, Peter Moore, is included, while the current delegates relay thanks to a number of retiring ACS delegates. The ACS also notifies us of a change of Awards Registrar and the option of submitting digital images for ACS awards.

Carolyn Allen has reported on the COSV Spring Cymbidium Show held at Centro/The Glen Shopping Centre, the last major *Cymbidium* show of the season. While Victoria's flowering season is later than in other states, a show in early October gives the opportunity for a number of *Cymbidium* hybrids and species which don't usually appear at major shows to take centre stage.

Noe Smith brings us an overview of the species *Cym. floribundum*, and its culture and contribution to hybridizing. The article is accompanied by pictures of Glenda Coutts' beautifully grown plants of this important species.

Good health, good luck, and good growing.

*Your Editors*

## Editors



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**Rob Smith**

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*Cym. floribundum* 'Album HCC-CE/COSV.

# *Cymbidium floribundum*

Text by Noe Smith. Photography by Rob Smith

While most commonly known under its synonym of *Cym. pumilum*, which is the name recognized for the purposes of hybrid registrations, *Cym. floribundum*, to give the recognized botanical name to this species, is one of the most important of the miniature species in terms of the development of miniature and intermediate cymbidiums as we know them. It is also a most desirable and appealing orchid in its own right as the accompanying pictures of two beautifully grown and flowered examples illustrate.

*Cym. floribundum* is a true miniature in every sense of the word, having foliage between 30 and 45 cm. in length, flower scapes of between 15 and 40 cm long and flowers that range from 2 to 4 cm across. The flowers are closely spaced, with between around one dozen to over three dozen per inflorescence. *Cym. floribun-*

*dum* is native to China, Taiwan and Japan and grows in varied habitats including on rocks in shady gorges, in native pine forests and in sunny open locations. It may be found growing as a semi-terrestrial, or as an epiphyte.

The plants illustrating this article were beautifully grown by Glenda Coutts of Croydon, Victoria. Glenda is the new President of the Cymbidium Orchid Society of Victoria and has a keen interest in miniature cymbidiums including species such as *Cym. floribundum* and the Australian natives, including *Cym. suave*. As the pictures illustrate, *Cym. floribundum* can be a most floriferous species and is a rewarding subject in its own right, although it is when used as a parent in the hybridizing of miniature and intermediate cymbidiums that its true importance is realized.

*Cym. floribundum* has a number of synonyms, with the name *illiberale* also in common usage along with *pumilum* and *floribundum*. Flower color ranges from pure color green through tan to brown and red.

Its cultural requirements are not demanding with plants growing happily under the conditions suiting the majority of *Cymbidium* hybrids. Stephen Early, in his reference work on *Cymbidium* species notes that it grows happily under shade house conditions in Melbourne and I have seen this species growing well in shade houses in South Australia and New South Wales, confirming its adaptability.

It's clear that these traits of compact and floriferous habit, good flower counts, variety of color forms, plus ease and adaptability of culture suggest *Cym. floribundum* as an ideal subject for hybridizing and



its success as a parent proves its value.

A check of the RHS registrations shows a total of two hundred and nine registered hybrids using *Cym. pumilum* (*floribundum*) with one hundred and twenty nine of those using this species as the pod parent and eighty as the pollen parent. What is more notable than merely the number of hybrids is the grexes produced, many of them being highly successful cymbidiums and great parents in their own right. Among the progeny of *Cym. floribundum* are the following:

Beaconfire, Bedivere, Celadon, Celtic Imp, Dolly, Fairy Rouge, Jessie Blakiston, Jimbo Tupp, Katydid, Mary Pinchess, Mimi, Minneken, Morialta, Nip, Olymilum, Pipeta, Prolific, Ruby Eyes, Sarah Jean, Summer Clouds and Tom Thumb from the pod parent side.

From the pollen parent side – Dag, Doctor Baker, Mini Splendour, Minuet, Miss Muffet, Nancy Maxwell, Pee Wee, Pumisan, Putana, Tommy and Wakakusa.

Many of the grexes listed have gone on to prove themselves as important parents in their own right. *Cym. Ruby Eyes* is arguably the most important parent in the production of dark red intermediate cymbidiums with names such as Aussie Rules, Khairpou, Marilyn Levy, Peggy Foo,



*Cym. floribundum* 'Album' HCC-CE/COSV, grown and shown by Glenda Coutts.

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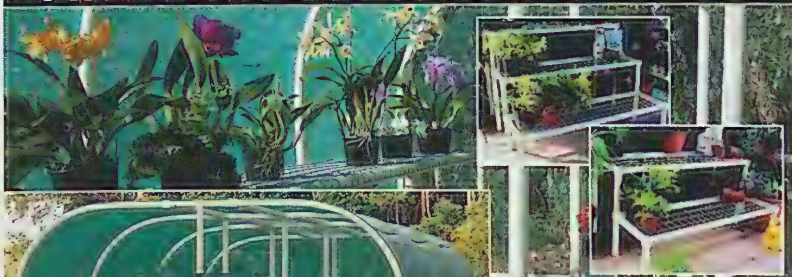
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Radiant Ruby, Ruby Pendant, Ruby Valley, Street Hawk, Ten Pin and Willunga Regal from its lineage. There are over 90 *Cym. Ruby Eyes* hybrids registered and it is still in use as a parent today.

*Cym. Dolly* has some 47 hybrids to its name with offspring such as Gold Madonna, John Gomes, One Tree Hill and Tracey Doll among them, while *Cym. Sarah Jean* has been one parent in 69 hybrids including Drouin Masterpiece, Gowlings Gem, Lady Sarah, Little Sarah, Maluka, Melanie, Mini Dream, Memoria Jaqueline Oyston, Mont Niron and Pure Sarah, to name a few.

With other significant parents stemming from *Cym. floribundum* including Dag, Doctor Baker, Jessie Blakiston, Jimbo Tupp, Katydid, Mary Pinchess, Minneken, Olymilum, Putana, Summer Clouds and Tom Thumb, it's clear how important *Cym. floribundum* has been to the development of miniature and intermediate cymbidiums as we know them. Others may make a case for different miniature species as the most important in the development of modern miniature and intermediate cymbidium hybrids, perhaps *Cym. devonianum* comes to mind, but I doubt that any other single miniature



*Cym. floribundum*, red colored form, whole plant.

species has had the impact of *Cym. floribundum*.

While this in no way constitutes a detailed review of *Cymbidium floribundum* and its progeny, I hope it gives some



*Cym. floribundum*, red colored form.

insight into this attractive and influential orchid.

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# Australian Cymbidium Society – President's Report for 2006

I suppose it is a little bit of a cliché, but the longer you are in a position, the more you learn. I am enjoying my term as the Australian Cymbidium Society's President and, in gaining a better understanding of people's personalities, the job has been made even more enjoyable and interesting.

As I prepare this report the show season is well and truly over and you should all have finished your repotting?! I have been checking the mail box constantly for those back bulbs of last year's winners but they must have gotten lost in the mail, but don't worry I'll get over it!

In Sydney, and across most of Australia, it has been a year of contrasts. It has either been a great year, or a disastrous one, for flowering, depending on where you live. As you will remember, on New Year's Eve 2006 we had a day of weather extremes with temperatures in the mid to high forties here in NSW, accompanied by humidity levels of only ten percent. You can imagine the damage that was done with these extreme conditions at a time when flower spikes were just beginning to develop. Those of us that were at home and could take action to reduce the damage had survivors, but many growers lost virtually all the spikes developing at that time. Over the following days the true extent of the damage became apparent with many growers having some very sad and sorry badly burnt plants. By now most plants are well on the road to recovery, it just shows what strong and resilient plants cymbidiums are. Other areas of the country are facing already severe water restrictions, or facing the imminent introduction of harsh restrictions due to the ongoing drought. We can only hope that there will be some

relief before too much longer, not just for the orchids, but more importantly for our farmers, rural communities and the economy.

Looking back a few months, the 2006 National Cymbidium Show at Ararat was yet another success and all credit must go to the committee and the members of the Cymbidium Orchid Society of Victoria for the work and dedication involved in staging the event, it is truly appreciated.

The ACS extends its thanks to Leon Van Rijn and his Fleurijn Orchids-Holland for his generosity in again sponsoring both the show and the Leon & Wim Van Rijn special cut flower class and it was a pleasure to once again welcome him to our beautiful country.

Our appreciation also goes to the city and people of Ararat and their council for their long term commitment to the National Cymbidium Show concept, and for their generous support again in 2006.

Congratulations to all the winners at the show, in particular Kimberley Orchids for their Grand Champion Flowering Plant, *Cym. Kirby Lesh 'Pink Ice'*, a magnificent example of a true show bench champion – and to Phil Grech for his Grand Champion Cut Stem, *Cym. Hungarian Beauty 'Freeki'*, a fine example of this recently imported clone. There were many keen *Cymbidium* growers wishing they could get their hands on pieces of these plants and many of the other outstanding cymbidiums that were on display.

Once again this year your state delegates and their home state committees have applied themselves to the task of guiding the ACS forward and have taken their work very seriously. In an organization where the clubs which make up its

parts are separated by vast distances and have distinct local issues and approaches, compromise and a level headed approach is required. While we do not always agree, we have always succeeded in working through any differences to promote and develop cymbidiums.

Not long ago this country lost two legendary Aussie icons in Mr. Peter Brock (the King of the Mountain) and Mr. Steve Irwin (the King of the Crocs), their unexpected and sad passing, within four days of each other, is a timely reminder that life is too short and we should take a leaf from their books and try to live life to the fullest instead of getting bogged down with issues that are really not that important.

On that note I will sign off for this year and wish everyone great success in 2007 – and please drive carefully.

**Peter Moore**  
ACS President

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S464 Sylvan Star 'Tia' x President Gorbachev 'Diplomat' – Early to mid-season pinks with stunning bluish yellow centered lips

S465 Sylvan Star 'Tia' x Wyong Rouge 'Mulberry' – A back cross with 'Tia' hoping to intensify bluish yellow centered lips, later in the season

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S469 Yowie Rose 'Cabernet' x Surman's Rose 'Pamela Margaret' – Mid to late season pinks and reds with a show bench percentage

S466 Sylvan Star 'Tia' x Khan Flame 'Baroness' – Early to mid-season reduced foliage, good spike arrangement with stunning lips

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S4124 Joan's Charisma 'Vanily' x Poetic Winter 'Galeity' – Shapely whites with a percentage of green for the mid to late season

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S4165 (Lancashire Khan x Elegant Valerie) 'Tiger Eyes' x Pontac 'Rozel' AM/RHS – Tiger Eyes is a bright pink with a totally red lip. Rozel has shape, excellent spike arrangement

S4200 Winter Showers 'Manilyn' x Daintree 'Kiku' – High shape greens with a percentage of high flower counts in the mid to late season

S4202 Daintree 'Kiku' x Poetic Winter 'Galeity' – Mid to late season greens with a different genetic mix

S4205 Daintree 'Kiku' x Royal Fare 'No5' – Productive high shape greens for the mid-season

S4171 Culpaulin 'Snowflake' x Joan's Charisma 'Vanily' – Triploid Cross – Prolific, high flower count spikes for the late season. Cut flower and pot plant.



# Australian Cymbidium Society – Recent News

**G**rand Champion prize classes are back in the National Cymbidium Show schedule as monetary prizes again, BUT the concept of separate grand, or show champions for flowering plants and cut stems have been retained. With separate classes for flowering plants and cut stems in the show schedule it seems appropriate to have an overall champion cymbidium for both.

Digital photography for ACS awards will now be accepted. Transparencies (slides) will still be accepted for award photography as well, but we expect that over time digital will eventually replace film medium. A detailed report on this topic is featured elsewhere in this issue.

The return of state club assistant editors was a move suggested by your current editors as a way of better representing ALL member states within the pages of Cymbidiums Australia. In the early days of the magazine Dean Roesler had an assistant editor in each state to source local content and report on state shows etcetera. Over time

and due to a number of reasons, the system was replaced by Dean working alone and then with Noe and Rob. Being retired, Dean could usually manage a few of trips interstate each year, which allowed him to report on shows and chase up articles and interviews. This helped balance the mix between the member states until such time as Dean's failing health prevented him traveling. With our current editors being restricted in their travel opportunities due to work commitments, the return of state-based assistant editors seems like the best way of improving the input from all states. Volunteers have been found in each state and their contact details will appear in upcoming issues. It is important that members in all states feel represented by their national magazine and the best way of doing this is to have people involved in those clubs reporting on shows, events and topics of interest.

Thanks and appreciations are in order for some of our long serving delegates and officials:

**Helen Stretch**, who had served the ACS for a number of years as Western Australia's delegate, three years as ACS President, and as Awards Registrar since the positions inception, has finally relinquished her last official role, that of ex-officio Awards Registrar. The ACS extends its appreciation to Helen for the work she has done and wishes her well. At least now she will have more time to devote to her cymbidiums, not to mention those stunning displays she and her fellow club members put on at each national cymbidium show.

**Peter Gibson** has left us after his second stint as a delegate, having served the ACS early in its history and again for the past three years. Peter was always an enthusiastic and committed worker and a forthright representative on behalf of his state club, NSW.

**Murray Weston** has also announced his retirement as one of the two South Australian delegates. Murray ranks as the second longest serving ACS delegate alongside Kevin Black (NSW), both having served the ACS for nine consecutive years. During that time Murray helped guide the ACS through its formative years as the national show schedule, awards system, and judging handbook were developed and refined.

Welcome to our new Awards Registrar – as a result of the vacancy left by Helen, **Noe Smith** volunteered to take on the role of Awards Registrar and was duly appointed to the position by the committee of delegates with their thanks. Award applications and payments can be sent to Noe at the same address as the one given in these pages for our editors.

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A&W Witnish won champion small standard and champion in the Intermediate and Novice Sections, with their *Cym. Anna Szabo* 'Geyserland'.

## The Cymbidium Orchid Society of Victoria 2006 Spring Show Report

Text by Carolin Allen – Photography by Rob Smith

The show is set up in a major shopping centre in the eastern Melbourne suburb of Glen Waverly, Victoria, at the Centro/The Glen which is a particularly distinctive and attractive shopping centre with an outstanding glass roofed main hall ideal for the massed displays of cymbidiums. Our club, The Cymbidium Orchid Society of Victoria, sets up each October. The set up day was very warm bright and sunny, which can be the case at this time of the year in Melbourne. The plants are set out and judged in the loading bay and after judging, and when the centre has closed, the plants are moved up to the top floor via the service lift and two large displays are set up for the enjoyment of the general public and customers of the centre.

The last few years have been more typical of a Melbourne spring with rather cool and windy conditions in the loading bay but this year it was very pleasant with no wind, a situation appreciated by all judges, workers and exhibitors. The loading bay becomes very busy when the many members cars and vans start arriving loaded with plants. As is often the case just before a show is set up we heard many members commenting that we might be struggling for plants which is always a bit of a worry and, as of the Wednesday night before the show, we only had about 25 plants registered. Thankfully by Saturday night we had 200+ plants listed to come in, our members once again rising to the challenge. The centre likes all the plant name cards to be the same, a touch our club

thinks adds to the professionalism of our presentation, so our members provide me with the names of their plants and I write them out in script.

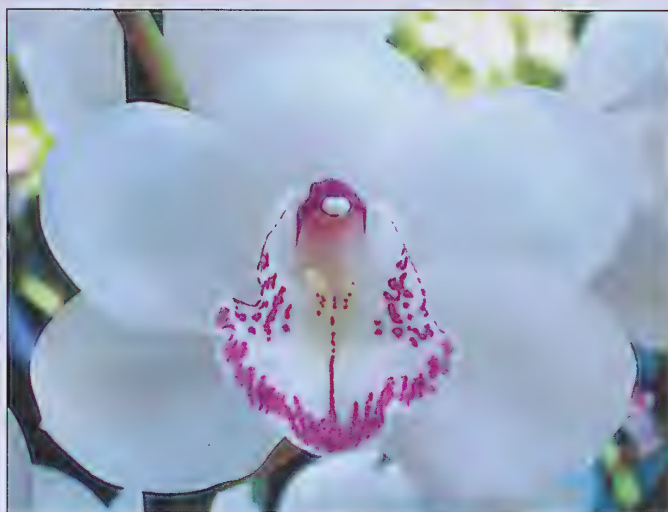
There were not the usual numbers of large flowering and small standard plants this year due to the unusual growing season, but the number of intermediate and miniature plants was up so we were still able to put up two outstanding displays, one featuring the plants from Open Section growers, the other dedicated to Intermediate and Novice Section growers plants. All exhibitors and the workers who set up the displays can be very proud of the results, with both displays being full of well presented *Cymbidium* flowers.

A couple of our newer Novice Section members exhibited and did very well in





*Cym. Julie Hawkes 'Atlantis', champion large flower shown by Kimberley Orchids.*



Single flower of *Cym. Julie Hawkes 'Atlantis'*.



*Cym. Jack Hudlow 'Waikanae', champion intermediate shown by A&J Leamon.*



*Cym. Flaming Vulcan 'Tee Pee', owned by T Poulton.*

the final judging, their plants more than holding their own against more experienced exhibitors. The fact that they, and all of the Novice and Intermediate Section exhibitors, displayed such well grown and presented plants is very encouraging and they can all be proud of their efforts.

A number of plants were shifted into classes added to the schedule before the judging began, as we always allow a little flexibility at this show because of the variety of *Cymbidium* types which are in flower, with many Australian native and *Cym. devonianum* hybrids appearing if spring is early. The extra classes created in intermediate and miniature size classes



*Cym. Tommy 'Amy' shown in the vintage class by A&J*





*Cym. Louie's Pride 'Noel's Joy'*, shown by N&J Guard.

were mostly for these pendulous and arching types.

The main winners of the show were:  
*Champion Large Flower Type* – Julie Hawkes 'Atlantis' – Kimberley Orchids  
*Champion Small Standard Type* – Anna Szabo 'Geyserland' – A&W Witnish  
*Champion Intermediate Type* – Jack Hudlow 'Waikanae' – J&A Leamon  
*Champion Miniature Type* – Plush Canyon 'Red Eye' – E Kettle  
*Champion Specimen* – Tuffet – V Dinh  
*Champion Seedling* – Flaming Vulcan 'TeePee' – T Poulton  
*Champion Intermediate & Novice* – Anna Szabo 'Geyserland' – A&W Witnish

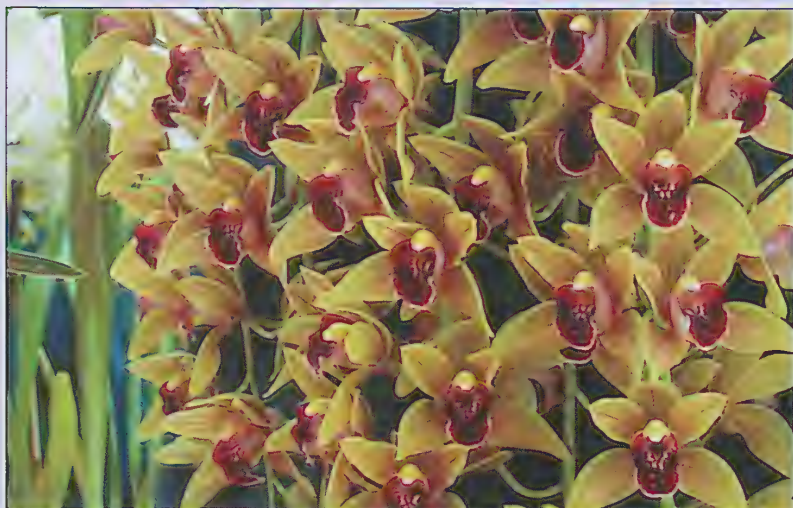


*Cym. Doctor Len 'Geyserland'*, owned by V Dinh.

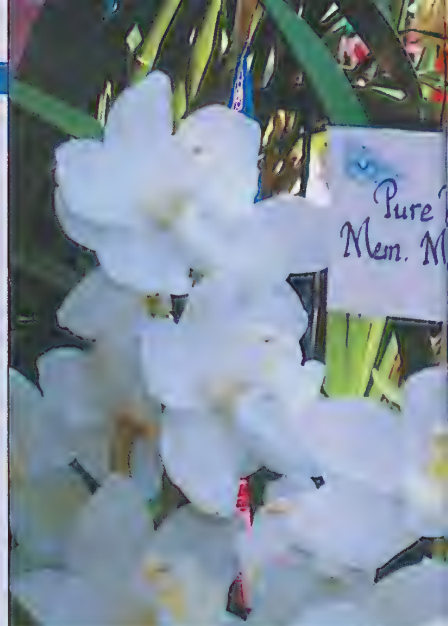


*Cym. Plush Canyon 'Red Eye'*, shown by E Kettle.





*Cym.* Plush Canyon 'Red Eye' in close up.



*Cym.* (Pure Destiny x Memoria Merv Dunn) shown by A



*Cym.* Tuffet, champion of show and champion specimen, shown by V Dinh.

The Champion Orchid of the Show came from the specimen class and was *Cym. Tuffet* exhibited by Viny Dinh, one of our very good Novice Section growers.

A number of plants have featured at this show for the last few years with Wendy and Alan Witnish once again winning the Intermediate/Novice Section with their *Cym. Anna Szabo 'Geyserland'*, and Jan & Andy Leamon's *Cym. Jack Hudlow 'Waikanae'* was again on the champion's list for the 3rd year running. (These two Geyserland Orchids bred cymbidiums have become regulars on the show bench at this time of year in Victoria.)

Viny Dinh's *Cym. Tuffet* was an exceptionally well presented plant and a deserv-



The prolific flowering on V Dinh's *Cym. Tuffet*.



T Antoniou's *Cym. Uncle Everet '105'*.



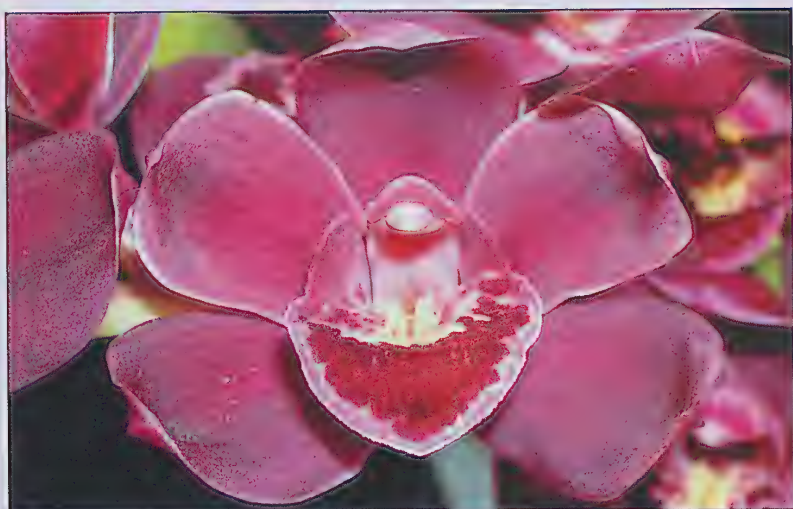


an.

ing champion of show. Congratulations to all to the winners and thank you to the exhibiting members because without your plants the show would not have been a success. As always our members seem to come to the party with quality plants to exhibit when they are called upon.

COSV expresses its thanks to Centro/The Glen for their continuing support, and to the many members of the public, many of whom make a special trip to this show each year, for their compliments on the show and the beauty of the flowers. ■

*Carolyn Allen  
18 Wootton Crescent  
Langwarrin, Victoria 3910*



*Cym. Red Promise 'Red' from T Antoniou.*



*Cym. Kiata 'Nightshade' by H&M. Morren, a vintage classic and famous breeder.*



*Cym. Anna Szabo 'Geyserland' shown by C & D Allen.*



# SAGE Horticultural Cymbidium Seedling of the Year 2006

Bob Campbell of SAGE Horticultural can be justifiably proud of what his support and sponsorship has facilitated in terms of the promotion of *Cymbidium* hybrids and seedlings in Australia since he first backed the seedling of the year concept back in 1995. But then, Bob's willingness to support a new concept is no surprise given his track record of innovation and development within the horticultural industry. Bob has spent many years developing innovative solutions related to glass and shade house construction and design as well as formulating his own fertilizers, plant growth boosters and plant conditioning formulas. The opportunity to visit Bob's factory and distribution centre in Melbourne shouldn't be missed if you ever have the chance, especially if you can spend a little time with Bob. Just listening to him is a great learning experience. SAGE Horticultural also imports some of the world's best and most innovative horticultural equipment, ranging from commercial automated potting machines to hobby-size fertilization systems and heating, cooling and fertilization equipment.

Since its inception, the SAGE (as it is commonly known) has presented approximately two hundred and forty outstanding examples of new *Cymbidium* seedlings, many of them from hybrids which have gone on to become benchmarks for their type.

Around 95% of the cymbidiums nominated as entrants in the SAGE have been the result of the work of Australian hybridizers and many of them have been grown and flowered by hobbyist growers, confirming the fact that not only do the "good ones" make it into the collections of hobby growers, but also that many, many hobby growers do grow seedlings. Once again, this year's winning entrant comes from the collection of a hobby grower and the ACS congratulates Steve Thomas on his winning of the 2006 SAGE Cymbidium Seedling of the Year competition.

*The ACS Committee  
c/- Secretary  
24 William Hunter Court  
Rosebud, Victoria 3939*

## SAGE Cymbidium Seedling of the Year Competition Winner for 2006 *Cym. Gwen Thomas 'Golden Aura'*

Text by Steve Thomas

How surprised I was at the Cymbidium Orchid Club of Western Australia's November meeting when ACS delegate Kevin Butler announced that my plant had won this prestigious award. I had purchased a community pot of five plants from the crossing *Cym. (Catamarca x Roger Roger)* about five years ago from Graham Guest of Guest Orchids in South Australia. The first plant flowered in 2004 producing one spike carrying six flowers. In 2005 this plant produced two spikes of ten flowers each and was Grand Champion at the COC of WA's annual show, also receiving an AM award.



The clone 'Golden Aura' did not flower until 2006 when it produced two spikes, also carrying ten flowers on each spike. 'Golden Aura' was Reserve Champion at our 2006 annual show. I think the cultivar name of 'Golden Aura' appropriately describes the flowers as, when they first open, they are a solid yellow color deepening to a rich golden "glowing" color as the flowers get older. This is enhanced and contrasted by the white labellum with its broad solid red bar.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mr Bob Campbell of SAGE Horticultural for his sponsorship and continued support of this award. I would also congratulate Graham Guest on his





*Cym. Gwen Thomas 'Golden Aura'*  
Owned and hybridised by Steve Thomas

hybridizing skills and thank him for letting me name and register the *Cym.* (Catamarca x Roger Roger) crossing. Finally, thanks to my friend Nardo Lenkic of Springfield Orchids for encouraging me to have a go at growing seedlings.

I have been growing orchids for about fifteen years, joining the South Eastern Orchid Society in about 1995 and the Cymbidium Orchid Club of Western Australia in 1997. My *Cymbidium* collection is quite small, consisting of 120 mericlones and about 350 seedlings. The seedlings are from 30 different crossings, eight of which I have made myself, and the

rest being purchased from either Guest Orchids, Bryants Orchids, or from the late Dean Roesler. Growing seedlings has added a new dimension to a hobby I am very passionate about. I would encourage all hobbyist orchid growers to give it a go and enjoy the thrill of flowering a new seedling. Who knows, perhaps you will be the next SAGE winner. ■

Steve Thomas  
Kalamunda, Western Australia  
[thethomases@bigpond.com](mailto:thethomases@bigpond.com)



## Large Flower

*Cym.* (Alexandra Beauty x Kelly's Winter)

New South Wales Nomination:

*Cym.* (Tracey Reddaway x Kelly's Winter)

Owner: M&F Ferguson

Hybridizer: D Roesler



Victoria Nomination:

*Cym.* (Alexander Beauty x Kelly's Winter)

Owner: D Wain

Hybridizer: Unknown



South Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* (White Valley x Valley Regent)

Owner: C Grigg

Hybridizer: Unknown



Western Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* (Coraki Gold x Coratea)

Owner: Ezi-Gro Orchids

Hybridizer: Ezi-Gro Orchids





## Small Standard Flower

*Cym. Gwen Thomas 'Golden Aura'*

### New South Wales Nomination:

*Cym.* (Margaret Thatcher x Vibrant Blush)

Owner: T Hughes

Hybridizer: Bryants Orchids

### Victoria Nomination:

*Cym.* (Joan's Charisma x Pristine Spring)

Owner: T Poulton

Hybridizer: Bryants Orchids



### South Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* [(Lancashire Rose x Solana Beach) x Valley Regent]

Owner: D Cook

Hybridizer: Bryants Orchids

### Western Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* (Catamarca x Roger Roger) 'Golden Aura'

Registered Name: Gwen Thomas

Owner: S Thomas

Hybridizer: G Guest





## Intermediate Flower

*Cym.* [Gold Madonna x (Peetie Doll x Guadalupe)]

### New South Wales Nomination:

*Cym.* (Jessie Blakiston x Mid Pink)

Owner: H& J Palmer

Hybridizer: H Palmer



### Victoria Nomination:

*Cym.* (Culpaulin x Dolly)

Registered Name: Dolly-Lin

Owner: T Poulton

Hybridizer: H Palmer



### South Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* (Sarah Jean x Pure Destiny)

Registered Name: Pure Sarah

Owner: Valley Orchids

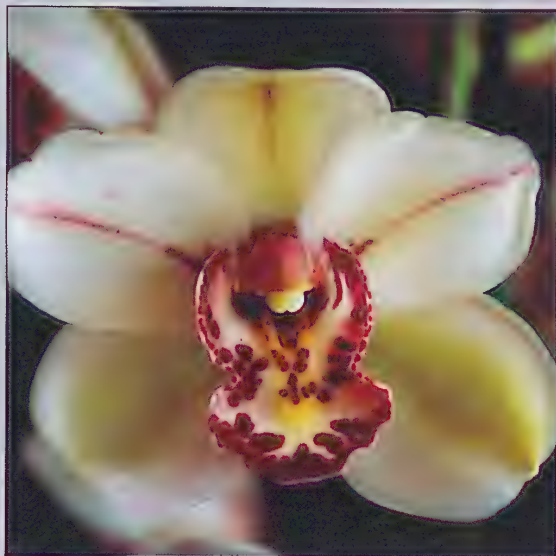
Hybridizer: Valley Orchids



### Western Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* [Gold Madonna x (Peetie Doll x Guadalupe)]

Owner: Ezi-Gro Hybridizer: Ezi-Gro





## Miniature Flower

*Cym.* (Dolly x Janis Lin)

### New South Wales Nomination:

*Cym.* (Dolly x Janis Lin)

Owner: A&J Leamon

Hybridizer: A&J Leamon

### Victoria Nomination:

*Cym.* (Blazing Fury x Last Tango)

Owner: G Serhan

Hybridizer: Bryants Orchids



### South Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* (Jessie Blakiston x Yowie Flame) 'Amore'

Registered Name: Night Flight

Owner: A Addison & J Jarmyn

Hybridizer: D Roesler

### Western Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* [Dr. Stanley Parkinson x (Summer Nights x White Water)] 'April Blitz'

Owner: Ezi-Gro Hybridizer: Ezi-Gro





# Novelty Flower

*Cym. Darch Freak 'Wonderland'*

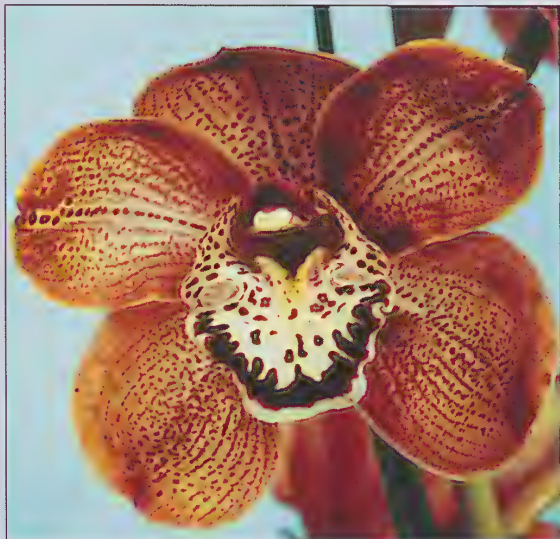
## New South Wales Nomination:

*Cym.* (Khan Flame x Yowie Rose)

Registered Name: Flaming Vulcan

Owner: C Fraser

Hybridizer: Bryants Orchids



## Victoria Nomination:

Nil

## Western Australia Nomination:

*Cym. Darch Freak 'Wonderland'*

Registered Name: As Above

Owner: Ezi-Gro

Hybridizer: Ezi-Gro



## South Australia Nomination:

*Cym.* (Pywacket x Hot'n'Spicey)

Owner: A Addison & J Jarmyn

Hybridizer: Unknown







The pristine icy white and the colors in the labellum of this *Cym. erythrostylus* are rendered truly.

## A move to digital photography

While a number of orchid clubs and societies across the country have discussed the feasibility of moving to the adoption of digital photography for award purposes, to date, everyone seems reluctant to take that all important step and commit to this now widely accepted technology.

Already most *Cymbidium* clubs have adopted digital, in some cases alongside the traditional film transparency (slide) images for their club records of major shows, plant competitions and awards and, now, following the November 2006 ACS delegates meeting, the national awards system will accept digital images as records for awards.

In the view of the delegates and the clubs and societies they represent, digital photography has come of age in terms of



In this shot the sharpness combined with a little slow flash details the crystalline cell structure in this miniature flower.

delivering image quality, convenience, affordable equipment, image handling and presentation. There have been some members in other orchid clubs who have raised concerns about the ability to alter digital images by computer. This is certainly a reality, but we could not see how this would benefit anyone who had received an award as it is the plant that is judged for award after all, not the pictures taken afterward. We think any obvious doctoring of pictures would be picked up as features such as color would no longer match the written award record.

2006 saw the first SAGE *Cymbidium* Seedling of the Year competition where all flower images were submitted as digital images. We are sure a look through those pictures featured elsewhere in this issue





1With some fill in flash, color can be rendered accurately by most modern digital cameras, even when photographing in the often difficult lighting conditions at show venues.

will confirm the quality and integrity of digital images.

Digital certainly provides a much more convenient medium than slides, not only in terms of viewing the pictures while judging, but also in terms of convenience over slides for more mundane reasons. It is becoming increasingly more difficult to obtain slide film in many areas and processing is now often unavailable in Australia, depending on where you lodge your film for processing. It is now much more common to see orchid growers photographing flowers etcetera at shows with digital cameras than film cameras and as less and less people use film, especially slide film, and the problems of availability and processing will only become worse. For better or worse, film photography will inevitably become restricted to a few specialist areas.

As mentioned earlier, the issue of image quality in regard to digital photography

has largely been overcome with modern digital cameras. Only a few short years ago digital image quality comparable with film quality was restricted to top end (and very expensive) professional cameras well beyond the budget of most of us, and cer-

tainly more than the casual photographer could possibly justify. Now a few hundred dollars will buy a digital camera capable of good quality images and digital SLR cameras are now below \$1000 in some cases.

By way of illustration, the pictures accompanying this report were all taken with a sub \$1000 semi-professional digital camera now a couple of years old and rated at 5 mega pixels. While a good quality camera with a good lens, it is certainly not the newest, or highest mega pixel camera available today.

Hopefully the option of submitting award pictures as digital images will reduce the incidence of poor quality award pictures as digital images can be viewed immediately and re-taken if necessary, rather than having to wait until slides come back, perhaps two weeks after they were taken. If slides are of poor quality there is rarely any chance of re-photographing the orchid in question, at least not in the condition it was in when it was awarded.

The ACS believes that the level of acceptance digital photography has received at state club level indicates that our members are comfortable with the option and have readily embraced what is fast becoming the primary and preferred photographic medium. ■

*The ACS committee of delegates,  
c/- 24 William Hunter Court  
Rosebud, Victoria 3939.*



**Above:** At 5 mega pixels the detail in the labellum of this intermediate *Cymbidium* is showing good detail and color.



**Left:** At 5 mega pixels the occasional unwanted detail can show up if you're not careful, like this scale on a *Cym. canaliculatum* hybrid's leaf.



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## 2007 ORCHID EVENTS – WHAT'S ON!

**February 25** – Hills District Orchids  
Summer Open Day, Northmead NSW

**March 17-18** – Oasis Orchid Spectacular – Broadbeach QLD

**March 30-April 1** – Sydney International Orchid Fair – Castle Hill NSW

**May 18-20** – Victorian International Orchid Fair – Greensborough VIC

**June 7-9** – Sub Tropical Orchid Council of Queensland Triennial Orchid Expo – Bribie Island QLD

**July 8** – Tinonee Orchids Open Day NSW

**September 6-9** – Flora Fest, Mt Penang NSW

**September 29-30** – Orchid Heaven 2007, Bega NSW

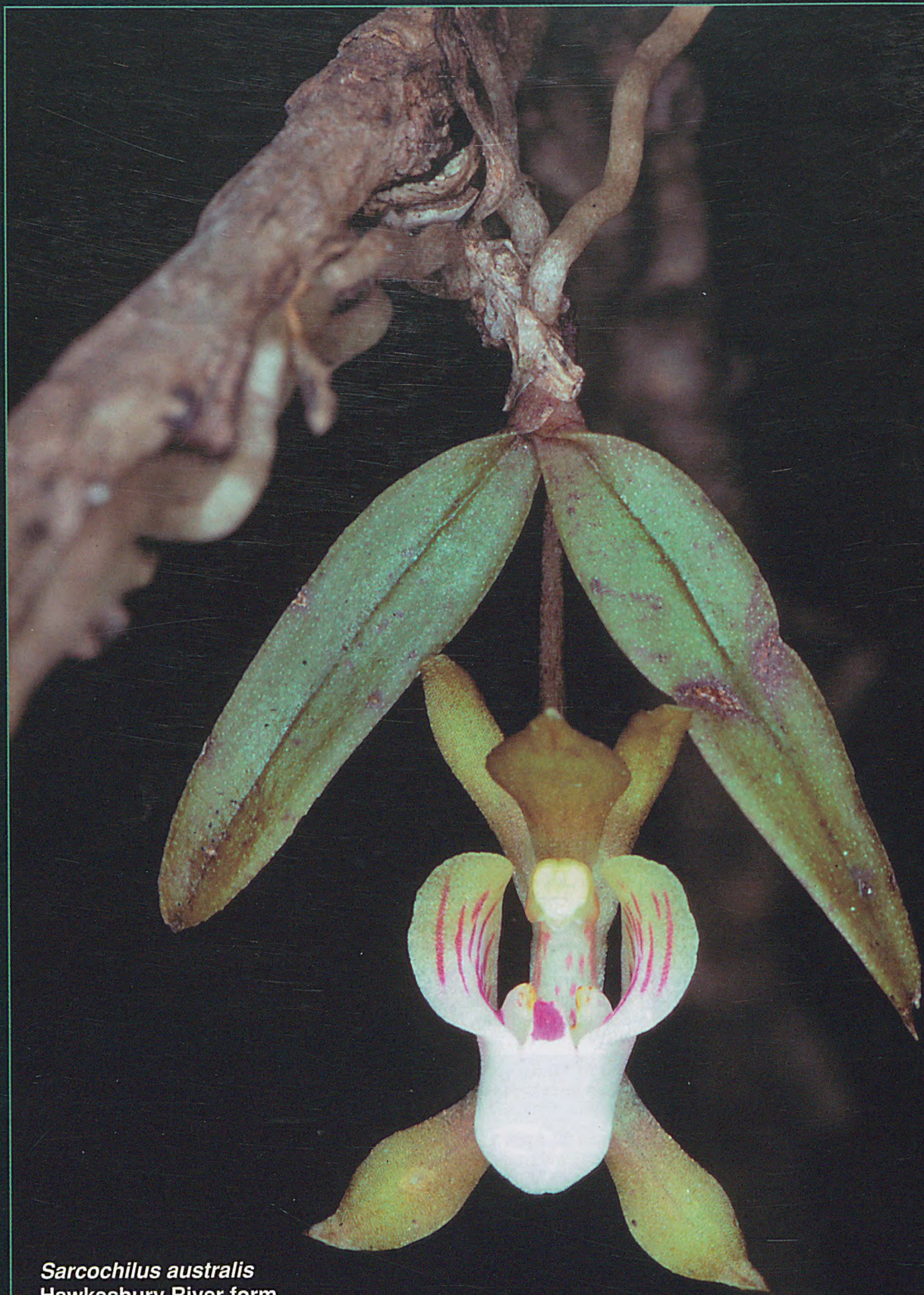
**October 7** – Hills District Orchids  
Spring Open Day, Northmead NSW

**December 2** – Dark Star Orchids Open Day, Northmead NSW

## 2008

**September 27-29** – Tasmanian Orchid Conference 2008





*Sarcochilus australis*  
Hawkesbury River form,  
New South Wales

Photography – David Banks